TRUTHS,

FROM THE WEST INDIES.

INCLUDING A SKETCH OF

MADEIRA IN 1833.

CAPTAIN STUDHOLME HODGSON,

HER MAJESTY'S 19TH REGIMENT OF FOOT.

"Sworn to no party, of no sect am I:
I can't be silent, and I will not lie."—POPE.

LONDON:—WILLIAM BALL,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

1838.

LONDON :
R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD-STREET-HILL.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE LORD VISCOUNT HOWICK,

IN WHOM,

AS THE HIGH-MINDED AND UNCOMPROMISING ADVOCATE, ON ALL OCCASIONS, OF EVERY LIBERAL PRINCIPLE,

THE COUNTRY RECOGNISES

A WORTHY HEIR TO HIS ILLUSTRIOUS FATHER;

TO WHOM,

DURING THE SHORT PERIOD OF HIS CONNEXION WITH THEIR ADMINISTRATION,

THE COLONIES LOOKED UP WITH UNUSUAL CONFIDENCE,

INSPIRED BY THE JUSTICE OF HIS AIMS,

AND THE COMPREHENSIVENESS OF HIS VIEWS;

AND WHO,

WITH REFERENCE MORE PARTICULARLY TO THE SUBJECT OF THIS WORK,

HAS BEEN DISTINGUISHED ALIKE

FOR THE SAGACITY WHICH ENABLED HIM TO FORETEL THOSE EVILS, WHICH IT IS NOW, THOUGH LATE, ATTEMPTED TO REPAIR;

FOR THE INTEGRITY

WITH WHICH HE RENOUNCED ALL PARTICIPATION IN A MEASURE WHICH HE DID NOT APPROVE;

AND

FOR THE MIXTURE OF INDEPENDENCE AND GOOD FAITH

WITH WHICH HE ASSERTED HIS OPINION, WITHOUT BETRAYING OR DESERTING HIS ASSOCIATES;

The following Pages

ARE, BY HIS LORDSHIP'S PERMISSION, INSCRIBED

BY

THE WRITER.

PREFACE.

THESE pages, with the exception of the last two chapters, were written in the West Indies, and would have been submitted at an earlier period to the public, had I not, since my return to this country, been in a state of health unfitting me for mental exertion, (and even now precluding the careful revision of what I had noted down.) Considerable delay in publication having thus unavoidably occurred, I contemplated relinquishing the subject; hoping, also, that the colonists, even at the twelfth hour, might be prompted to evince something like mercy

towards their unfortunate negroes, in which case I should have regretted to re-open animosities.

Deceived in this latter point, I at length send out these "*Truths,*" cautioning the people of England that they too will be deceived, if they for one moment believe that the colonists, in emancipating their apprentices, have other objects in view than to lull the attention of the public in this country, and then, by a series of local enactments, to bring back our free negro brethren to a condition scarcely one degree removed from absolute personal slavery.

The portion of the volume written in the West Indies, was, on my arrival in England, perused by Mr. Macaulay. That good man was even then on the bed of sickness, which was to be to him that of death. His

expiring faculties were however aroused whenever the righteous cause, to which he had rendered such mighty service, was alluded to; and he conveyed to me not only the expression of his anxiety that what I had prepared should be published, but the full assurance of his countenance and protection, should it please Providence to prolong his life.

From those, to whom the name and memory of Macaulay are dear, I will fearlessly ask what Macaulay himself would have rendered.

STUDHOLME HODGSON.

October 3, 1838.

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NOTES.

Note 1—P. 147.

At Naparima, in Trinidad, a priest named Carrillo ordered an iron bar, with twelve rings, to be made for stocks by the blacksmith of the quarter, who is also a captain of militia. On its completion, he summoned the negroes, lectured them upon the duties of obedience and respect; next informed them that those rings were made in honour of the TWELVE apostles; finally proceeded to give the stocks his benediction; sprinkled "holy water" over those prototypes of our Saviour; and in order to heighten the solemnity of the scene, and reach the climax of blasphemy, the priest absolutely placed one of the blacks into the stocks to make him sit as godfather.—*Extract from a printed Address to Earl Bathurst, by an Inhabitant of Trinidad.*

Note 2—P. 148.

To Lieutenant-Governor Sir George Hill, Bart., the following petition of Marie Jeanne, on the part of her daughter Veronique, a cripple, and now on the treadmill, showeth:

That, four years ago, Veronique was abandoned by her master, Toussaint Leroux, because he thought her worthless as a slave and

past work, owing to general debility and an ulcerous habit of body, occasioned by the hardships she had suffered. She sought an asylum with a discharged African soldier, named Hunt, by whose care she partially recovered, with the loss, however, of the greater part of one of her feet. Toussaint Leroux, hearing of this, arrested her. Being again badly treated, she ran away; and again arrested, was ordered to jail with one month's hard labour on the treadmill, on which I saw my poor child last Wednesday. I implore you not to let her, a cripple, a woman, be longer kept at it.

"I have examined Veronique, and am of opinion she is capable of working on the treadmill. The loss of toes does not prevent it."

(Signed) "J. NEILSON, *Physician.*"

"4th MAY, 1835."

"Whereas Veronique Marie Jeanne having been convicted before me this day of being a runaway, was adjudged one month's imprisonment and hard labour, these are to command, &c.

(Signed) "JOHN CADIZ, *Special Justice.*

"25 APRIL, 1835.

"*To the Alcayde of the Jail.*"

NOTE 3—P. 149.

The petition of Anne Harriette John, showeth:

That she long lived with Dr. Neilson, colonel of the Trinidad artillery, and served him so faithfully as to be generally known as the doctor's "Black Diamond."

In consequence of a dispute, Dr. Neilson had her shipped off to the distant quarter of Maruga, where she arrived after a voyage of nine days. Her transportation was so suddenly effected, that she had not time to collect her clothes and little property. She was placed on the plantation of Mr. Henry Luney, commandant of

Maruga, who told her he had bought her cheap on condition of not allowing her to come to town until the expiration of her servitude.

That having been brought up as a favourite domestic, and unaccustomed to the privations and sufferings of prædial servitude, she implores she may be permitted to hire herself out at a fair rate from her present owner, until she can make interest with her friends to relieve her from bondage.

Note 4—P. 149.

The petition of Mary Venus, &c. &c.:

That she belongs to Mr. Massey, junior, and has worked four years on the Bonne Aventure estate.

On 1st August she heard the negroes were free, but they have made her work from six in the morning till eight at night, except Sunday, when she and Auguste, her husband, cultivate their own garden.

At the end of May last, she could not work extra in the field, being six months gone with child. On Thursday last the manager told her he had hired her to Mr. Panten, one of the members of council. She said, "I cannot go away from my garden and my husband." The manager said he could not help it; she had better speak to Mr. Panten: but this latter's manager refused a pass; and she being afraid of being taken away by violence, has found her way to town, having walked one day and three nights. Mr. W. Massey having run away since he was charged with the murder of a child he had by his own sister, the petitioner went to his brother-in-law, one of the members of council, who told her to go back and speak to Mr. Panten; but as she does not wish to trust altogether to Mr. Panten's humanity, she implores your Excellency to interfere, &c.

July 22, 1835.

NOTE 5—P. 150.

Melie, an apprentice labourer, appears before the magistrate, and states:

She pays five dollars per month by way of hire for herself. Her master demands an additional sum of one dollar and a half per month for her child, aged ten years, who lives with her.

She cannot pay this latter sum at present, and her master has determined to take her child from her, and to send her to an estate far away. She implores, &c.

August 31, 1835.

NOTE 6—P. 150.

Dear Sir, *August* 17, 1835.

My wife Margaret is very ill in jail, and causes me sad pain and uneasiness.

I have scraped fifty dollars from my friends, but her master wants one hundred. Do, dear Sir, prevail on him to take the fifty, and grant me six months to pay the other. For God's sake, do something, for the child being confined with the mother is every day sick. Pray use your blessed interest, and get the mother and child released, and I will be everlastingly grateful.

(Signed) LOUIS SIMON PLUMPER,
Military Labourer.

NOTE 7—P. 151.

October 3, 1835.

The petition of Thomas Mendoza, otherwise called Mundo Foretop, labourer, on the Laurel Hill estate, showeth:

He is sixty years of age, and has been a driver since 1807. Four weeks ago the manager came, in company with another named Northington, and abused him for not making the people work

more; adding that he would take his appointment from him, and send him among the gang. Complainant said, "Oh dear, massa, don't abuse me before the gang; you make me too much ashamed."

Three days after, complainant was ordered to appear before Mr. Cadiz, who told him to answer for disobedience of orders. He had taken no witnesses with him, not knowing what was to be the charge. Mr. Northington said, "He is a damned robber, Sir; he is stealing his master's time by not forcing the gang to work more." Mr. Cadiz said, "Old man, I am sorry to see you. I remember you a good and trusty servant under Judge Warner, your former master, but I must punish you." He then asked what witnesses there were; when Northington replied there was none but himself. Mr. Cadiz then sentenced me fourteen days' imprisonment.

I was taken to a boiling house, lately converted into a cachot, and there was only a small opening, one foot square, to let in the air. The walls were wet, and the mortar which they were plastered with was not yet dry. There was no bed nor place, except the boards attached to the stocks, to sleep upon. I suffered dreadfully. Next day my wife brought me, by the manager's order, two pounds of salt fish and two pounds of flour for a week's allowance. The jailer, Mr. White, on seeing it, however, mercifully insisted more should be sent. At night I suffered so much from cramp, that on being let out in the morning for the purposes of nature, I could not stand, but was obliged to crawl on my knees and hands. On the third day, Mr. Cadiz mercifully moved me to the outer room, and at the end of a week I was liberated by order from Mr. Cadiz.

I have saved a little money, and want to know what I could buy my freedom for. I am told 300 dollars. I said I am old and weary, and could not be worth so much; but my liberty is refused for less.

I therefore pray you will get me fairly appraised, and I will always pray for you.

NOTE 8—P. 151.

To the Right Honourable Sir G. Hill, Bart. Colonel of the Londonderry Militia, Lieutenant-Governor, &c. &c.

The petition of Slamank, otherwise Adam, aged eighty-five years, a Mahomedan priest of the Mandingo nation, most humbly showeth:

That he was thirty-five years of age when he was sold into slavery; and notwithstanding his sacred profession, has been forced to labour in the fields, and undergo the sufferings and degradation of slavery for fifty years.

That all his family have been separated from him in his old age, his children from time to time having been sold; and that he now remains alone on the Marli estate without family or friend.

That on the 1st August, 1834, the petitioner, then eighty-four years old, was told that the King had made him free, but that he must still be an apprentice to learn the same trade of digging cane which he had been practising for fifty years.

The petitioner, whose blood had warmed at the prospect of enjoying freedom, even for the last few days of his wretched existence, must now abandon all hope of living to see the day of his redemption.

He implores your Excellency to allow him *to go free*. He was born free, and he wishes to die free. He renounces all claim to remuneration for fifty years' servitude. The Mandingo church in Port of Spain will support him. Extend your protecting arm, O your Excellency! and the petitioner, &c.

NOTE 9—P. 153.

Alguacil Mayor's Office, 20 September, 1832.

Public notice is hereby given, that on Monday next, the 1st of October, there will be exposed and offered for sale before the doors of this office the following properties and effects:—

Two slaves, named Joseph and Celestin, property of Louis Rochard.

A family of six slaves, belonging to Mrs. Redhead, named Fanny, George, Thomas, Francois, Mary, and Susan Rosette.

Two lots of land in York-street.

A mule, the property of the heirs of Fauseil, and a slave named Vedal, belonging to Mr. Mathieu.

Note 10—P. 163.

Barbadoes.

By his Excellency Sir Lionel Smith, K.C.B., Governor-General, &c. &c.

A Proclamation.

Whereas Lawrence Edwards, late of Searle's estate, in the parish of Christ Church, planter, stands charged with having violently and feloniously made an assault upon Juliana, an apprenticed labourer on the said estate, an infant under the age of twelve years, and with violence and against her will ravishing the said Juliana, &c. &c.

February 18, 1836.

Note 11—P. 163.

Mr. ——, since made commandant of ——, was accused of violating the person of a young negro girl. The evidence of a medical man proved the injury, but no notice was taken of the transaction by the public authorities, and the delinquent was allowed to retain his situation (he was then a deputy commandant), and stalk at large.—*Extract from an Address to Earl Bathurst.*

Note 12—P. 166.

From these Americans the commandant exacts unlimited obedience, compelling them to till his lands and take off his crops. This

conduct soon disgusted them, and all who could slipped away, but were forced to return. One of them was by orders of Mr. Mitchell, the commandant, tied up on the parade ground to a tripod, and severely flogged with a cat-o'-nine tails.—*Address to Earl Bathurst.*

NOTE 13—P. 169.

It is the duty of the commandant to act as coroner; but during the course of twelve years I have never heard of a case in which he has exercised the duty. In consequence, the grossest species of violence, and even murder, have been committed with impunity. Complaint has proved of no avail.

The captain of a sloop was much addicted to liquor, and in his moments of inebriation was wont to beat a negro boy on board most unmercifully. The fellow was an excellent swimmer, and whenever he saw the captain about to attack him, he would jump overboard. One luckless evening, just as the anchor was thrown, the boy either fell or was knocked overboard, and contrary to his usual custom, did not come up again for some time. Another negro on board jumped into the water, and found the poor fellow nearly drowned and helpless. On his being brought on deck with very slight signs of life, some passengers advised the captain to carry him on shore for medical aid; but he refused, and set off with his passengers, leaving the boy for the second trip, by which time the poor fellow had escaped all the ills "which flesh is heir to." The case was made known to the commandant, yet not even a reprimand was passed on the drunken and brutal villain.

A respectable gentleman, Mr. Regis Vincent, was one night roused from his bed by the lowing of cattle a short distance from his pasture. He desired a negro to go and see what was the matter. He went, but *never* returned.

The next morning John Burdon, a Scotchman, a neighbour of Mr. Vincent, requested him to come over, for there was a negro dead in his guin-gross. It appeared that at daylight a man named

Michel, belonging to the Concord estate, was passing by, and seeing some one lying with his face downwards, approached and perceived he was dead. As it was close to Burdon's residence, he reported the circumstance to him. Burdon expressed astonishment, and accompanied him to the spot. Michel found a gun-stock lying by the dead man, and laying hold of it, said he would take it home with him. "No," replied Burdon, "it is mine; I left it there yesterday." About eight o'clock the writer proceeded to the spot, along with another person, and saw the unfortunate negro lying with his face imbedded in earth and blood, with one clog on, and his cutlass by his side. The writer also saw the head examined, and the removal of the flaps to each ear presented a frightful scene of violence. The bones of the temple on both sides were perfectly broken to atoms, and the fracture extended to the very base of the skull, whilst three wounds, inflicted with some sharp-pointed instrument, penetrated deep into the brain. Who murdered that negro? was the natural question. A long chain of circumstantial evidence created a suspicion that Burdon was the assassin, and that he had committed the act in a fit of drunkenness and anger, in revenge for the depredations on his Guinea grass. The presumption was strengthened by the situation and condition of the gun-stock. But the case was suffered to die away: no coroner's inquest was held; no evidence heard; no inquiry made: and the commandant satisfied his conscience by affixing on the door of a shop a notice, offering "the reward of one hundred dollars" for the apprehension of the murderer of that unfortunate negro.

About two years before this, this same Burdon fired at and severely wounded a young coloured boy in the legs, but the occurrence was entirely overlooked.

Note 14—P. 187.

By his Excellency Sir Lewis Grant, K.C.H., Governor and Commander-in-Chief, &c. &c.

Whereas the registry of the Court of Vice-Admiralty in and for the said Island of Trinidad, was forcibly broken open and entered by some evil disposed person or persons, during the night of Saturday the 10th inst., or the morning of the 11th, and certain informations and other proceedings, relating to causes then and yet pending before the said court, or heretofore instituted and concluded therein, stolen, taken, and carried away; and whereas it is expedient that the author or authors, and all others concerned, or in any wise taking part in so lawless and daring an outrage, should be brought to justice and punished: Now therefore I do hereby offer a reward of 200*l.*, &c. &c.

Port of Spain, November 12, 1832.

Note 15—P. 200.

Trinidad.

By his Excellency Sir George Hill, Bart., Colonel of the Londonderry Militia, Lieutenant-Governor, &c.

Whereas during the night of the 24th the office of the Escribano of the Court of First Instance was forcibly entered, and certain proceedings, then pending before the said court, were stolen and carried away; and whereas the future interests of the community, and the injured justice of the country, demand that the perpetrator of this daring outrage should be discovered, I hereby offer a reward of 200*l.* &c. &c.

April 26, 1833.

"On the eve of the day appointed for the trial, it was the mishap of justice to be thwarted by one of the most daring and villanous of midnight robberies, that could blacken the pages of the Newgate Calendar."—*Colonial Observer.*

NOTE 16—P. 216.

To the Lieutenant-Governor of Trinidad.

The petition of Josef da Costa, a free Portuguese by birth, but now an apprenticed labourer, &c. &c.

That he came to Trinidad on certain conditions, and sailed from Fayal on October 31st, 1834. He and twenty-seven others were clandestinely landed on the north coast, before the vessel had been reported at the custom-house. They found nine of their countrymen already there, four of whom shortly afterwards died in great misery. There was no medical man nor priest.

The petitioner and the rest, fifteen days after their arrival, were carried to Mr. Graham's estate at Chaguanas. There they remained two months, where they worked with the negroes in the field. The consequence was, they all became sick, and many died. Petitioner and his wife were, through the humanity of Mr. Graham, removed to town, and placed in Marie Ursule's hospital, where his unhappy wife died. After this, his services were bought by one Mr. Losh, and he was sent down the coast, where he was badly treated, and when unable to work as the negroes did, cruelly beaten. To escape from this misery, he left the estate on the 18th of the present month, and is now lying in the town in the last stage of misery and starvation. He humbly implores his case to be inquired into.

Witness, A. SHAW. JOSEF DA COSTA.

July 29, 1835.

NOTE 17—P. 219.

To the Lieutenant-Governor, &c.

Francisco Josef da Sorsa states:—

He was ordered to the Retrench estate, of which Mr. Higgins is manager, and where he experienced much ill treatment. He, his wife, and children, often asked leave to quit; being refused, he attempted several times to escape, but failed. In one of these

attempts, on 10th July, he was arrested, and imprisoned for one month in the cachot at Petit Bourg.

At the same cachot, at this time, were three other Portuguese imprisoned: Antonio Francisco Doutra, Francisco Doutra da Silva, and Antonio Ignacio Nunez. They were all placed in the stocks four days and four nights. During their imprisonment the only allowance given them was a small loaf of bread, much smaller than the half-bitt loaf sold in Port of Spain, and a bottle of water. The cachot is eight feet square, but no windows; both doors were kept shut except for a short time, when bread and water were brought. Those who were able went out at this time to obey the calls of nature. At last, when they were all sick, there was no one to clean the filth, which accumulated in the room. There was no bed nor bedding; they lay on the bare ground. Doutra and Silva were very ill: during the whole month that deponent was in the cachot, they were not visited by any medical man. On 3d August, Nunez, who appeared to be dying, was carried back to the estate on a mule. On 10th August, deponent was taken out of the prison, but was unable to walk. On inquiring for Ignacio Nunez, he found he had died three days after he had left the cachot. Deponent further swears that his wife Maria, together with her children, is detained against her will on the estate.

Sworn on the holy Evangelists of Almighty God and the sign of the cross.

NOTE 18.—P. 220.

Before the poor man could deliver the letter into your Excellency's hands, he was seized and incarcerated in the cachot of Benjamin Hughes, the policeman. Hearing this morning of his illegal imprisonment, I made inquiries, which however have only caused an aggravation of his sufferings, for he has since been shipped off to the coast.—*Extract of a Letter to Sir G. Hill, Bart., bearing date Trinidad, 12th November*, 1835.

NOTE 19—P. 221.

San Fernando, July 15, 1835.

On Monday, a Portuguese woman and two children, in a pitiable state of health, came down here to go to Port of Spain with her husband. It seems the man had not leave, as, when he was going on board, he was seized by the manager and Captain Murray's alguazils, by whom he was handcuffed. The woman remained to share her husband's fate. Two other Portuguese, who had assisted the poor family through the mud with their two children, were also arrested, handcuffed, tried, condemned, and put into the Bella lock-up house in the stocks. All this was done without an interpreter, and not a soul understanding a word of their language.

Just this moment I have seen a letter from the overseer of the Vista Bella to Captain Murray's clerk, informing him that this morning, the third day, one of the prisoners was near dead from starvation and suffering, and that he had taken it on himself (they don't belong to the Bella Vista) to relieve him, being afraid the man is dying, and adds that the other two are very ill; no doubt, he coolly observes, for want of food.

Is there no Christian to do something for these poor strangers? For God's sake, try and make known these things where they will be attended to.

NOTE 20—P. 223.

Josef Francisco Maciedo, a native of Fayal, states:—

That, in November last, he was brought to Trinidad by Mr. Searle; and that he belongs, as he has been told, to Mr. Losh (partner of one of the members of council, Mr. Burnley), to whom Mr. Searle sold his services under such circumstances as can never be accomplished on one side, nor ever will on the other; consequently the petitioner must remain a slave during the term of his natural life, or, rather, until the term of his natural life be abridged.

The petitioner's wife and one of his children have already expired in a miserable manner; and his other children are dependent for a precarious meal upon what little charity they can find. The petitioner's appearance will vouch for the misery he is reduced to. But his case is not singular. Almost all his countrymen have suffered equally: half of them have been delivered by death, while the remainder are fast following, without a priest even to console them on the way.

I have been beaten and flogged, and otherwise maltreated. I escaped about ten days ago, with the marks on my body, which I have shown to many people.

(Signed) JOSEF FRANCISCO MACIEDO.

Witness, A. SHAW.

Trinidad, July 29, 1835.

I certify having seen the marks of stripes on the body of this unhappy man, who also appeared in the last stage of sickness.

(Signed) YOUNG ANDERSON, *Solicitor.*

NOTE 21—P. 223.

To the Lieutenant-Governor, &c.

Manuel Furta da Branquinho and his wife, Mariana Francisca, showeth:

They came here on 22d November last. They were sold for three years to Mr. Losh. Four of their children have since died; and they implore your Excellency to interpose, to relieve them from a slavery worse than that to which the negroes have been subjected.

NOTE 22—P. 223.

José Francisco and Maria Ignacia, his wife, were cajoled from their native country Fayal. They were imported by Mr. Searle, who sold them to Mr. Bush for 100 round dollars each. They signed a paper, of which they knew nothing, and they now find

themselves in slavery. They have been forced to work from six in the morning until six, seven, eight, at night, without sufficient food. Maria Ignacia, a white woman of delicate constitution, has been turned into the field, and forced to dig the earth with a hoe under a dreadful sun.

They implore your Excellency, &c.

NOTE 23—P. 225.

(Signed)

Antonio Ignacio,	Antonio da Rosa Keua,
Manuel Ignacio da Sosa,	Francisca Tomasa,
Manuel da Rosa Silviera,	Reta Tomasa,
Josef Furtado Prai,	Anna da Silva,
Joas Silviera,	Manuel Joaquin,
Manuel da Rosa,	Francisco da Palo,
Juan Prayl,	Antonio Garcia,
Gualberto da Silviera,	Manuel Ribeiro,
Maria Rita,	Josef da Rosa Fortad,
Josef Francisco da Madeira,	Manuel Prai,
Francisco Prenea,	Josef Amaro,
Francisco di' Riego Silva,	Manuel Francisco da Madeira
Dominguez Fernandez,	Josef Francisco,
Emilia da huna Ijlha,	Antonio Francisco, &c.

Appended to the original.

"I certify that the above marks and signatures are those of the individuals whose names are attached thereto, and that I have explained the contents of the petition to them in the Spanish language, repeated in Portuguese by Manuel Gilberto da Silviera.

"I wish it to be clearly understood that I know the contents to be true, and pledge myself to substantiate the same by evidence before any tribunal, should I be called up and authorized so to do.

(Signed) "YOUNG ANDERSON."

NOTE 24—P. 270.

Government House, 31*st July*, 1834.

To give security to the town and neighbourhood at this particular juncture, I have deemed it advisable to require the services of a proportion of the militia, and have the satisfaction to state to you, as commanding officer of the troops, that a sufficient number from the royal and loyal regiments have volunteered their services to enable me to establish the guards, of which I herewith enclose a detail. These guards are to be mounted this day before six o'clock, at the respective alarm posts noted.

I request you to acquaint me what is the practice with respect to the giving of the sign and countersign.

I have directed Mr. Murphy, of the dragoons, the bearer, to say that I have ordered two of the militia dragoons to be on duty at St. James's, &c. &c.

(Signed) G. F. HILL.

To Lieutenant-Colonel Hardy.

NOTE 26—P. 275.

Port of Spain, August 1*st*, 1834.

His Excellency has directed me to inform you that there are a great number of apprentice labourers at Government House, and many more coming into town from various quarters, and to request you will send a company of your regiment.

(Signed) STEPHEN ROTHERY.

Colonel Hardy.

NOTE 27—P. 277.

1*st August.*

The number of negroes arrived and arriving induces me to be of opinion you should send in more than thirty men. I am anxious to see you and to advise with you.

The danger will be great, if the town apprentices join and coalesce with those from the country.

Colonel Hardy. G. F. HILL.

[On the back of the above letter is the following memorandum, in the handwriting of Colonel Hardy:—

"No more men were sent on this requisition. I went into the town about twelve o'clock, and remained until half-past six or seven. Nothing like a mob, so called. About 200 poor creatures, two-thirds of whom were women, were at Government House; orderly, silent, and distinguished by their respectful demeanour. They bore their disappointment and torrents of rain, without one mark of even anger, for six hours. From ten to seventeen men and women were sent to jail."]

NOTE 28—P. 286.

August 2d.

SIR,—May I beg that the chief of police, gaoler, or any other individual, may be requested to abstain from ordering the gaol, or any other guard to load their muskets, a measure quite unnecessary and unmilitary. Last night, at six o'clock, the corporal and his guard were ordered to load their pieces, in which condition they marched into barracks this morning.

(Signed) H. HARDY, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

To the Secretary to Government.

NOTE 29—P. 290.

Government House, 2d August.

After witnessing the violence of the mob this evening, I am under the necessity of requiring a reinforcement of the main guard to be sent here forthwith.

All the Naparima negroes are on march to town.

(Signed) G. F. HILL.

Lieutenant-Colonel Hardy.

NOTE 30—P. 292.

August 3d.

I request you will inform the Lieutenant-Governor that I rode through the several streets in Port of Spain last night between nine and ten o'clock, and found the utmost silence and tranquillity, a state of good order which continued all night. I left the town a little after daylight this morning.

(Signed) H. HARDY.

To the Secretary to Government.

NOTE 31—P. 296.

August 4th.

I beg you will report to his Excellency the perfect tranquillity and stillness of the town during the whole of last night. I passed through several streets, from nine to eleven o'clock, at intervals, and again between four and five this morning. I have the satisfaction of giving his Excellency the foregoing assurance on my own observations.

(Signed) H. HARDY.

To the Secretary to Government.

NOTE 32—P. 296.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 4th August.

SIR,

I am directed by his Excellency to state that the addition f a company of the 19th regiment to the guard at Government House is absolutely necessary in the present state of the town; and his Excellency requests that that reinforcement may be sent within as short a period, &c.

(Signed) P. D. SOUPER.

To Lieutenant-Colonel Hardy.

NOTE 33—P. 304.

August 5th.

I have the honour to report that a detachment of the 19th regiment, detailed in the margin, proceeded yesterday evening, at six o'clock, to Port of Spain. They are to be quartered in a large room, attached to Government House, in the town, where, up to this moment, every thing is perfectly quiet. The assemblages of negroes appear to have been for the greater part women.

(Signed) H. HARDY.

Lieut.-Col. Bridgeman, Deputy-Adjutant-General.

NOTE 34—P. 310.

SIR, *St. James's, August 6.*

Having heard that application has been made to the Major-General commanding the forces in this country for additional troops, I take the liberty to request you will inform me to what extent troops may have been asked for, and whether any arrangement has been made for the quarters of additional numbers, should they arrive.

(Signed) H. HARDY.

The Hon. P. D. Souper, Secretary to Government.

SIR, *St. James's, August 10.*

The Colonial Government having applied to Barbadoes for 200 additional troops, I have to request that an arrangement may be made for their quarters, and that you will be prepared with the necessary barrack equipment for that number of men.

(Signed) H. HARDY.

To Capt. M'Intosh, Barrack Master.

THE MARTYRED SMITH.

The memory of this just man is still loaded with obloquy in British Guiana. Not only does his name stand on the judicial records of the colony as a convicted felon, sentenced to death, but in the memorials of the events which have marked its black history, he is mentioned in the same terms.

It will be remembered by those who took a deep interest in the fate of this intelligent, pious, and devoted missionary, that the Government of the day merely commuted the sentence of death, passed on him by a court-martial, into perpetual banishment from the colony, leaving the stigma of crime attached to his fair fame. Before the decision of the Government, however, reached the colony, worn out by disease, the result of anxiety, confinement, and exertion, this good man died in jail, and was buried at midnight in the common burial-ground, where not a shrub or stone marks the spot where his body was interred.

That the Missionary Society with which he was connected—that the religious body to which he was attached in this country—should have taken no steps to vindicate the honour of one of their very best agents and associates, is surprising; we trust, however, that as the proofs, not only of his legal, but of his moral innocence, are still in existence, immediate steps will be taken to wipe from his memory the foul blot which colonial malice has attached to it. At all events, the iniquitous sentence must be reversed; and no individual is so capable of obtaining posthumous justice for the martyred Smith as his fearless and most eloquent advocate in parliament, the Right Honourable Lord Brougham.

R. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD-STREET-HILL

TRUTHS

THE WEST INDIES.

CHAPTER I.

Departure from England—Arrival in Madeira—First Scenes—Hints to future Travellers — Corruption among the public Functionaries—Consumption—Affecting Instance—Miss F.—Conduct of the British Merchants—Don Alvaro da Costa—Anecdote—Domain of M. de Cavalho.

On the 22d of October, 1833, I left the Downs, and on the 3d of the following month arrived in Madeira.

At the period of my departure from England, the winter was setting in with extreme severity, and will long be remembered by the merchant service, from the loss it sustained.*

* Ninety thousand tons of shipping were destroyed before the month of December.

In the Channel, we encountered numberless *vessels running to port, where,* as the event proved, they were destined to remain for months; we, however, seized the favourable moment, and had the good fortune to get to sea.

Perhaps the first and most lasting impression made by a speedy voyage to Madeira, under the preceding circumstances, is rapture at finding oneself wafted in a few days, as if by magic, from the very centre of snow and winter to the charms of an exquisite spring. I never remember to have experienced so delightful a sensation, as on first setting foot on this island. The climate and my liberation from a crowded vessel, occasioned an exuberance of spirits which at first led me to regard every object through the happy medium of my own feeling: this, however, gradually subsided, and I was enabled to look around me with that calmness and impartiality so requisite in a chronicler of *facts.* I suspect other visitors to this spot have recovered less easily from their enthusiasm; on this supposition alone can I understand the unqualified nature of their praises.

I do not intend to enter upon a detailed description of Madeira; the subject has been *handled by too many eloquent and glowing pens*; but I consider myself called upon to point out some of the serious blemishes which have been forgotten or concealed by former writers.

In the first place, it would be difficult to convey an idea of the filth it is necessary to wade through, and the objects of disgust by which at every instant the senses are assailed, before the arrival at an hotel can be effected. Bands of sturdy beggars, almost in a state of nudity, greet the traveller on his arrival, exposing to view ghastly wounds, and thrusting themselves upon his notice with an eagerness and ferocity not only revolting, but appalling. Should they find their demands for alms unheeded, they will often with dreadful execrations throw vermin from their persons upon any ladies who may be present, or perhaps dash into their faces their mutilated and festered stumps. Having escaped from these loathsome objects, the visitor is exposed at every jail he passes to scenes almost equally shocking.

On his approach, the whole of the inmates rush to the gratings of the prison, and with yells and shrieks which will long echo in his ears, and with an appearance of famine which thrills him with horror, implore a compassion which no Englishman is found to deny, when he learns that by the charity alone of the humane are these wretched people saved from almost starvation, government having provided no means for their support.

I will imagine the traveller freed from these inconveniences, and to have succeeded in obtaining a few hours' repose. After this commence troubles of a different kind. It is necessary to obtain from the authorities at the Custom-house a *permit* for the landing of the baggage, as not even the most trifling article is allowed to be brought on shore without a written order: and to prevent any deviation from this rule, an officer is stationed on board every ship during the whole period of her anchorage in the harbour, paid and supported by the captain. On sending for any portion of baggage, woe betide you if there be marked in the order "small trunk," when *port-*

manteau was intended: neither explanation nor entreaties will soften the heart of the Cerberus on board; and to your dismay the messenger will return empty-handed, except, taught wisdom by experience, he has had the tact to employ the potent influence of a bribe. And here I cannot but remark upon the shameful effrontery with which the functionaries of Madeira accept pecuniary presents: no concealment appears requisite; there they stand, with outstretched palms and clamorous solicitations, exposed to the gaze of multitudes of their own countrymen as well as of foreigners. I was given to understand that these scandalous proceedings were sanctioned by government, as an excellent expedient by which to remunerate its servants without cost to the state. I do not extend entire credence to the existence of so corrupt a system; still I am bound to say, that what I witnessed in other instances induces me strongly to suspect that the charge is not without foundation. For the benefit of future visitors, I must not neglect to mention, that there is one occasion where even a bribe will

be found without avail; that is, when the articles required from the vessel are not passed through the Custom-house before two o'clock P. M.; in which event it is absolutely necessary to remain without them until the following day. I was unable to learn the origin or advantage of this regulation, but am led to believe, that the officers, like the servants at inns in France, are bound among themselves to share, in equal proportions, the various sums individually received. Hence the benefit to them of this rule is manifest, as in the event of there being any technical error in the designation of the baggage, no time is left for its correction on that day; and the generality of persons prefer submitting to robbery rather than endure the inconvenience of a delay of four-and-twenty hours. So rigidly is this law enforced, that a friend of mine desirous, about half-past two o'clock, of obtaining from among his wife's effects a small parcel of the utmost consequence, she being in a very precarious state of health, ventured on the liberty of soliciting an interview with the governor.

His excellency received him with the utmost courtesy, but could not accede to his request without the concurrence of the judge, nor the judge without that of the bishop. After a long consultation it was decided, that it would be inexpedient to infringe the regulation in question; and my friend, at the risk of his wife's life, had no *alternative but acquiescence in the fiat.*

When at length you have the good fortune to find yourself disentangled from these difficulties, and fixed in one of the delightful villas, you are in a fit mood to relish the charms of the climate and the place.

I can fancy no scenery, and I have travelled over most parts of Europe and a large portion of Asia, more lovely, more majestic, than that of this enchanting island. On the hills, as far as the temperature will admit, are vines of extraordinary uxuriance; while even the loftiest mountains are adorned with a perpetual verdure.

Here reign in unbroken succession alternate spring and autumn; utterly unknown are the scorching heat of summer and the icy chill of

winter. The eye is enraptured by the view of a perpetual bloom, and the traveller ranges through meadows where grow spontaneously flowers, raised with difficulty even in the greenhouses of England, and scrambles through hedges composed of the myrtle, the rose, and the jasmine.

Notwithstanding these charms, predisposing the mind to cheerfulness and happiness, I must confess that there came across me sombre and melancholy feelings, which went far to neutralize the whole. I reflected how numerous had been the young, the lovely, and the noble, sent, and sent, alas! in vain, to Madeira for the recovery of their health. How few, indeed, of a certain class ever visit it but with this object. I walked through the churchyard dedicated to foreigners, and surveyed with shuddering the many, many records of the ravages effected by that insidious foe, consumption. I pictured to myself the scenes of woe which have here occurred. I imagined the agony of a mother accompanying her child to this land of PROMISE, and after months of excitement, now

despairing, now hoping, at length laying that child in the sepulchre of the stranger. I had no reason, however, to conjure up a phantom of imagination; I witnessed the reality in all its painful truth. To describe the case, I must revert to a few months previous. In the midst of the London season, at perhaps the brightest Almacks of the year, my eye was attracted by the most exquisitely beautiful girl whom it has ever been my lot to behold. Few paintings ever equalled that lovely face, or sculptures that unrivalled form. There she was, the young, the beautiful, and the gay, blooming with health and spirits, happy and courted, enrapturing by her wit and smiles a whole galaxy of stars and ribbands. Little, little did I then foresee when and where I was again to encounter this brilliant vision; still less that when next it crossed my path, it would be descending rapidly to the grave: but so, alas! it was. Five short months from the above period, Miss —— once more met my sight: it was at Madeira. Her countenance had then an unearthly softness of expression, which can never fade from my memory;

otherwise in appearance she was unchanged: the same matchless features, the same perfection of form, the same heavenly smile. But one glance sufficed to tell me that death had marked this angelic being for his own. Unlike the generality of victims to consumption, she was well aware of her approaching fate; and notwithstanding this awful certainty, two feelings alone appeared to agitate her spotless mind: the one was the hope that her life might yet be spared sufficiently long to enable her once again in this world to embrace her brother; the other was the bitter reflection as to what would be the sufferings of her mother, when the moment for final separation should arrive.

"I am the idol," she often exclaimed, "the very idol of my mother. She blinds herself to my hopeless state; and what, O God! what will become of her in this land of strangers, when she can no longer refuse to believe the fatal truth."

I subsequently conversed with the afflicted parent: too true she did not, or would not,

perceive the danger of her child to its full extent; and knowing the agony which would be the result, I had not the barbarity to whisper my thoughts.

"It is," she said, "but a temporary weakness; what malady can lurk under that bloom? She is suffering from a cold consequent on an imprudent exposure to the night air, but this genial climate will soon restore her to her friends."

On inquiry, I discovered that this cold, this DEATH WARRANT, had been received at that very Almacks where I had seen her so brilliant, so cheerful, so courted. Inscrutable indeed are the ways of Providence!

I will not attempt to describe my feelings when I called to bid farewell. Mrs. —— was almost a stranger to me; but under peculiar circumstances those barriers of form are broken through in a moment, which in the usual routine of life would require years to remove; and believing firmly that heartfelt sympathy occasions a corresponding feeling of kindness, even among perfect strangers, and without the interchange of a single syllable, my

heart assured me that I had acquired a friend for ever. Nor am I ashamed to confess that my cheeks were bedewed with the bitterest tears which I have shed since childhood, when six weeks afterwards I learned by the public journals that this charming girl was numbered with the dead.

Of the numerous invalids annually arriving in Madeira, it is truly melancholy to observe how small a proportion are destined to quit it. It is with pain, and only after a rigid scrutiny, that I venture on this assertion. The climate I have acknowledged pure and genial; and if climate alone could cure, recovery would be certain. But the truth is, the VICTIMS arrive too late; their fate in this world is irrevocably sealed long before they abandon the shores of their own country. The medical men, in many instances, from the hope of being able themselves to restore their interesting patients to health, tamper too long, and counsel a change of climate when no change can avail. In others, they fear to alarm, by even hinting at a removal to Madeira; and the propo-

sition eventually is, perhaps, suggested by the very dying party, to whom months previous it should have been made. The result in both cases is the same: a tedious voyage, succeeded by a certain death.

I will not detain the reader with descriptions of local scenery, nor of private life; but as it may not be uninteresting to learn the effect produced in the island by the civil war then waging in the mother country, I will proceed to offer a few words on the state of Madeira in the year 1833, leaving others to pronounce whether our national mania for meddling was advantageous, or the reverse, to this particular spot.

Every mind was absorbed in the contemplation of the struggle carrying on between the two brothers of the house of Braganza, and in intrigues, according to the political bias of the different parties.

Private society was completely destroyed; discord pervaded every family; commerce was depressed; the results of the violence with which the British merchants had entered the arena

of political dissension.* The rancour and bitterness of party spirit evinced by these individuals surpass almost any thing of the description witnessed by me, even in England, and were the less excusable, as they were bound by the position they held as foreigners, and in a land where they were only tolerated on sufferance, not to cabal against the government, which, however execrated, and justly execrated by its own subjects, had always, to them, at least, extended a beneficent and protecting hand. And while on this subject, it would be unjust to pass over in silence the officer to whom the government of Madeira had at this time been confided, Don Alvaro da Costa.

Notwithstanding his intimate knowledge of the cabals carrying on against him, personally, as well as against the government of which he was the representative, still mildness and urbanity characterised his every proceeding, while nothing could exceed the promptness and justice with which he

* I must exonerate Mr Webster Gordon from any participation in these unworthy proceedings; his conduct throughout was, as it always is, that of a gentleman, a man of the world, and true British merchant.

listened to and decided upon every grievance brought under his notice by the British residents, who owe to this upright and excellent man a debt of gratitude which they never can repay. They cannot be ignorant that he alone saved their properties from utter destruction, it being but natural that indignation should pervade the breasts of a large portion of the population at witnessing their national disputes fomented and encouraged by the intrigues of foreigners, and at receiving almost daily intelligence of relatives and friends having, in the mother country, fallen in engagements with the English. I more particularly remember one family being deprived, in a single day, of the father and three sons; could we have felt surprise had bitter retaliation been the consequence?

That this did not occur, that aggression was not visited with aggression, nor blood avenged with blood, the merchants of Madeira are indebted solely to Don Alvaro da Costa. The following anecdote is characteristic of his forbearance, and will, I trust, call up blushes of shame when, the excitement of politics having passed away, the personages

alluded to will be enabled to scrutinize their actions through a medium more creditable to their country, and to their calling.

A clerk of one of the leading mercantile houses having become enamoured of a Portuguese young lady, made proposals of marriage, the rejection of which by the father, led him to the design of assassinating him.

Waylaying him one evening, he rushed upon him, pulling at the same time the trigger of a pistol, which fortunately missing fire, enabled the old man to commence a struggle with his assailant. It was, however, but brief; what could avail age, and age defenceless, against youth and weapons? The grey-headed victim was felled to the earth, and his adversary, drawing a second pistol from his pocket, deliberately discharged its contents into the body of the prostrate father, in vain imploring mercy for his daughter's sake. The miscreant was seized and conveyed to prison; and then commenced the intrigues of the English faction. Tears of compassion were shed for this "poor young gentleman," (thus was the ruffian

designated;) subscriptions were entered into in his favour, plans formed to bribe the jailer, a place of refuge prepared for him when escaped from prison. In a word, this murderer—(for assuredly he merits the appellation, although his intended victim, after months of agony, eventually recovered from the wound)—this murderer, I repeat, was regarded as a martyr in a righteous cause, and for no other reason, but that he professed himself a Pedroite, while the object of his vengeance had enrolled himself in the ranks of the opposite party. Where was the spirit of our fathers? where the proverbial rectitude of the British merchant, when a criminal like this could be transformed by party feeling into a second Brutus—be deemed worthy of protection and applause?

I am unwilling to dilate upon this disgraceful occurrence, and will therefore dismiss it, merely observing, that, before quitting Madeira, I was informed that this person had effected his flight from jail, and was living unmolested in the house of an Englishman. For here, indeed, an Englishman's

house was truly his "castle;" and the consequence of this mistaken delicacy on the part of the authorities, was—and I blush in recording the fact —that more than one Englishman's "castle" in Madeira was a sanctuary for the murderer and the traitor!

Who has ever been in the island without visiting the magnificent domain of M. de Cavalho? On asking if this gentleman were there, I learnt he had been mixed up in some conspiracy against the government, and had deemed it advisable to withdraw into exile. Sincerely lamenting the event, as report represents him munificent, hospitable, and charitable, I proceeded to his estate, although told by the party to which he belonged that I should be disappointed; that the property, thanks to the government, was an absolute ruin, the trees all felled to the earth, and the mansion tenanted by a rude soldiery. I frankly confess I almost desired this should be the case, wishing to find my informants as to the state of the island, for once, not in fault.

On arriving at the handsome iron gates, we were civilly received by the porters. They escorted us

in our walk, directing attention to the spots most worthy of observation. In vain I cast my eyes around for the felled trees; the stately forest amply contradicted the calumny. In vain I looked for the rude band of lawless soldiers, a guard of three men only was there stationed to protect the property. The interior of the mansion exhibited the utmost neatness, and the costly furniture was preserved as carefully as if the master himself had been present.

The only symptoms of devastation I could perceive, were on some superb pillars near the hall of entrance, on the observatory, and on the family chapel.

These places, I must admit, were defaced by numerous couplets and phrases in the English language, such as are sometimes seen at a country inn—the names of numerous visitors, English, Irish, and Scotch, with dates of arrival, were duly recorded; while sundry hieroglyphics, not of a very decent description, wound up the whole. The guide, without doubt, divined what was passing in my mind, and with a peculiar

smile observed—but I will not repeat the effusions of his honest indignation; suffice it to say, that I fully coincided with him, and turned from the degrading exhibition with shame and disgust.

I had now seen enough of Madeira, and on the following morning was many leagues on the ocean, sailing with a prosperous breeze for the West Indies.

CHAPTER II.

Arrival in the West Indies—Object of these Sketches—Fault of former Works—State of Party—Fury of the Planters—Plans to cripple the Abolition Bill—Origin of Reports respecting Insurrections—Motives.

In the month of December, 1833, I arrived in the West Indies, and served there with my regiment until its return to this country, towards the close of the year 1836.

The following pages are submitted to the public with the view of showing, from the result of personal observation, how far the West India planters deserve, either by their own character, or by their conduct towards the negroes, that degree of confidence or of forbearance which they have of late so arrogantly claimed at the hands of this country.

The period to which the notice of the reader will be called is that critical one which immediately preceded and followed the introduction of that most rugatory and deceptive of measures, as the planters have contrived hitherto to make it, the Act for the Establishment of Negro Apprentice*ship*; and a very instructive specimen of the manner in which that boon of the mother country was, in one island at least, ushered in by the colonial authorities, will be particularly described. If any one should be disposed to think that details of private society have been unnecessarily introduced, let him consider, in the first instance, with reference to the assertions of the planters and their agents, how much the credibility of a witness is affected by his habits of life, and let him remember in the next place, that the claims which the negroes have upon *us*, whether for protection or instruction, cannot be duly estimated, unless we know what are the people to whose control they are subject, and what are the examples which are immediately before their eyes.

Let him be assured, at any rate, that nothing

has herein been set down in the spirit of malice, or of personal detraction, and that in no instance will be detected a misrepresentation of facts. For whatever were the feelings with which the writer left the West Indies, he went there with no other intention or desire than to see things as they were, and to speak of them, if at all, as they deserved. He was pledged to no party, and committed to no opinion. There are, however, some occasions, as the reader will perhaps think, before he has got through these pages, in which impartiality can speak in no other language than that of indignation, and in which truth itself may run some risk, at first sight, of being taken for a libel. Such a case, if it should occur, may possibly be the misfortune of an author, but it is the fault of the subject; I write, however, without much apprehension on that score, as I am apt to believe that the prudence of those who may have most reason to quarrel with my sincerity, will either keep them altogether silent, or will at any rate confine their resentments to the use of those weapons so familiar to their hands, which they

have, in fact, already so long used, that the edge has been worn off—the weapons of calumny and invective.

During a long series of years the advocates of the negro have spoken with eloquence, and the fee'd retainers of the colonists have defended their side with the zeal of self-interest. From this, however, it has naturally followed, that in the works hitherto published respecting the West Indies a spirit of party is observable in every line; and from the numerous conflicting statements which have issued from the press since the question of emancipation has been agitated, not one can be selected on which implicit reliance is to be placed, the enthusiasm of philanthropy sometimes exaggerating the sufferings of the slave, while more often the lying pen of the hireling has palliated or denied the real oppressions of the master.

I hope, therefore, to enable the public to arrive at a correct conclusion; and this is the more important, as the people of England, while endeavouring to achieve negro emancipation, have, in the main, known but little or nothing of the community

respecting whose property they were about to decide—a community by which their holy purpose was so long and so virulently opposed, and to which has been conceded a compensation cruelly enormous in these days of distress—a compensation as far beyond their real wants and deserts as any for which the most visionary among them would have dared to hope. For the attainment of the glorious end no sacrifice has been considered too great; but whether, upon a nearer view, it may not be perceived that generous and enthusiastic feelings predominated too far when the twenty millions compensation was so madly voted, I shall leave to be decided by others.

The close of the year 1833 was indeed an important era in the annals of the West India history. The mother country had at length decided upon the great measure of negro emancipation, and nothing was wanting to render it the law of the land beyond a few local alterations. In a few short months, and what a mighty revolution was to be effected in the entire system of our colonial possessions! Man was about to be taught, that however

the hue of the complexion might differ, the time had passed away when he could regard and treat his fellow man as a beast of burthen, and that the slave, hitherto even worse regarded, worse treated, than a beast of burthen, was to have his dormant faculties aroused, to be told that he was still a man, and entitled to all the rights of humanity. It would be impossible to convey an idea of the excitement prevailing in every corner of the colonies. The fabric of society was shaken to its foundation, nor could the most long-sighted presume to calculate the result. The Abolition Bill by no means afforded unqualified satisfaction to any class of the European settlers; many, from the purest, most virtuous motives, lamenting that immediate freedom had not been accorded to the slave, and that he was still for six years to be exposed to the fangs of the task-master; others, from personally interested feelings, cavilling at one clause of the bill, or, from factious ones, opposing it in another: but by far the larger proportion were united in indignation at the legislature of Great Britain having dared, upon any grounds, to inter-

fere with their property, (such was the negro termed,) and were resolved to exert every effort to render the measure abortive.

In the breasts of these people all was wormwood and gall; from their lips flowed menaces of bloodshed and martial law, combined with curses against the mother country, the whole conveyed in language so demoniacal as to make us blush for the pseudo-civilized race. And these men were Christians!

Now let us contrast the bearing of the slave with that of the master, the oppressed with the oppressor.

While every thing around him was violence and excitement; hearing himself at all moments stigmatized as the vilest of the vile; exposed to the most capricious and most brutal treatment; marked out as the object for future slaughter, might not some little ebullition of the human passions have been pardoned? Thank God, he gave no handle to his tyrants; all remained tranquil; naught occurred at which the friend of the negro need sigh. Tens, yea hundreds of thousands of human beings were cooped up, panting for the blessed

boon vouchsafed to them in prospective by England; but they waited with a patience more than human for the fulfilment of the promise. And these were savages! Alas for the misapplication of terms!

The reader may, in some degree, imagine the spirit with which the colonial legislators assembled at their Council Boards, for the purpose of considering the measure submitted to them by the Imperial Parliament; but he would find it difficult to credit the full extent of their absurd and frantic schemes.

They not only declared solemnly, that no consideration should induce their acquiescence in the bill, but talked seriously of forming the West Indies into independent states, or, at all events, of throwing themselves into the arms of America, ready, as they affirmed, to receive them with rapture. To all who may doubt these facts, I recommend a calm perusal of some of the colonial newspapers of the period,* edited for the most part

* "Let us," advised one journal, "strengthen, by every means in our power, our connexion with the CANADAS; feeling the deep

by slave proprietors, assisted in all cases by the advice and gold of anti-abolitionists, and they will find the above maniac ravings not only represented as sound policy, but expressed in treasonable and sanguinary terms. At length, however, perceiving the expediency of desisting from these impotent resolves, they commenced applying themselves, with all form, to the consideration, NOT *of the bill, but of the manner in* which they could most easily cripple it, and delay it in every stage. The firmness of the Government at home paralyzed, in a great measure, the nefarious plan, and it being hinted that the compensation, amounting (forget not this, people of England,) to twenty millions sterling, must be rendered dependent on their adopting the proposed measure, the bill was eventually carried through the various Houses of Assembly, not however without strong opposition on the part of many of

sense of the injustice of our mother country, let us endeavour to forget that we ever pronounced the endearing term of 'home' in reference to the unnatural mother; let us unite hand in hand with Canada, and endeavour to COMPEL the people of England to do us justice, or leave us to ourselves."

the members. The utter ruin of the colonies was prophesied by these sage traffickers in human flesh, a general rising among the negroes was to be the inevitable result of their liberation, and their first act the extermination of the whites. It was hoped by these forebodings to intimidate the administration in England, to obtain an alteration in some of the most important clauses, and perhaps defer for the present the application of the very principle of the bill.

The following are some of the arts practised to deceive the English public into a belief that the moment freedom was accorded to the slave, rebellion would display her standard from one end to the other of our West India possessions.

New colonial journals were called into existence, whose editors were commanded to dedicate their columns to fearful descriptions of the well-grounded panic existing among the European population, with dark and mysterious hints as to conspiracies existing on many of the estates, the object of which was the murder of the various proprietors. Government was called upon to be prepared with

martial law; an opposition was organized against every governor who might be disposed to lean to the side of humanity; anonymous letters were at night scattered about the public streets, and thrown into the gardens of individuals, containing warnings at which any man might have been moved *without the charge of weakness.** *All this, it is* true, envenomed still more deeply the feelings of the colonists against their slaves, but signally failed in goading these poor people into a display of impatience or irritation, (the great wish of the planters,) and which would have afforded a corroboration of their assertions as to the awful position in which the mad scheme of freeing the blacks had placed them. Repeatedly, at night, flames were seen ascending from different estates; the bell of alarm resounded from a thousand

* Such was the alarm among the UNINITIATED, that on Christmas Eve, in 1833, it was deemed requisite at Barbadoes to have a regiment ready to turn out at a moment's notice during the night! it being circulated that the negroes purposed commencing the work of death when the whites should have assembled at the ball given at Government House. I subsequently saw, in one of the London opposition papers, a moving description of the consternation prevailing among the *respectable* classes on the occasion alluded to!

the act upon the negro; or if any damage were really done, it could generally be traced to some inebriated overseer having allowed his lighted cigar to fall among the canes.

This was perfectly well known upon the spot; but those who had courage to expose the scheme were by far too few to withstand the powerful majority, whose ends were gained when these burnings were trumpeted forth in their newspapers, and subsequently re-echoed by their organs in England.

A stranger to West India local politics might, with good reason, inquire whether the injury which *must* infallibly accrue to the plantations in the event of a rebellion, (to which all these arts would seem to propel the negroes,) would not more than counterbalance any distant advantage which they might

from the awakened sympathy or timidity of government in England.

This forcibly struck me, and it was only by a residence upon the spot, and by a careful observation of passing circumstances, that I was enabled to unravel the secret springs of action. The contrivances resorted to shall be exposed to the gaze of my countrymen.

The colonists were perfectly aware, in the first instance, of the innate mildness and submission of their unfortunate slaves; and in the second, that *government could* crush instantaneously the most powerful rising among them, should they be goaded to that extremity; while the English public being ignorant of these facts, and their newspapers teeming with descriptions of the insurrection at Barbadoes, the proclamation of martial law in Trinidad, the execution of a band of conspirators in Demerara, the consequence would be a large augmentation in the price of sugar, and probably a doubt as to the expediency of following up a bill which appeared fraught with such calamities. There was also another important reason for inducing in England

a belief that the West Indies were on the verge of destruction. It was hoped that many absentees, owners of large estates, would immediately take the alarm; and fancying beggary before them, command their agents to dispose of the same at any sacrifice. This was eagerly anticipated by a band of harpies upon the spot, and numerous were the splendid properties purchased at an almost nominal sum. Surely these advantages fully counterbalanced the burning of a few plantations, or the sacrifice of some dozen useless negro lives. These principles will be more clearly developed when I proceed to narrate the events which followed the 1st of August, the day on which the bill came into force; but as our narrative has not yet reached that period by several months, let us turn to the consideration of West India society generally, and see if the nature of the tree be not in perfect unison with that of the fruit.

CHAPTER III.

The Church in the West Indies—A Bishop—The Bar—A Judge—An Attorney-General—Scene in Court—Stipendiary Magistrates—How selected by Mr. Stanley—Worse than useless—Causes.

CERTAIN rules which hold good in every other portion of the civilized globe, are utterly inapplicable to the West Indies. Thus, for example, the Church and Bar carrying with them so much weight in most communities, find themselves powerless here, and that from the extraordinary nature of the colonial system, being coerced into siding with those whom they cannot but reprobate in their hearts, and into abetting measures which, by every obligation of religion and rectitude, they should unshrinkingly oppose.

The clergy depend in a great degree for existence on the different Houses of Assembly; their incomes

can at any moment be reduced or augmented; let them hesitate to acquiesce in any proposition submitted by the planters, and they are exposed to beggary, to worse than beggary; since the press, controlled by the same planters, will inflict wounds upon their reputation which no time can cure. It is therefore scarcely to be expected that they should encounter the danger which an open sympathy in favour of the slave would drag upon their heads.*

These remarks will, of course, apply with more or less force, according to the character of the prelate who may be nominated to preside over the Church in this part of the world; and if government should have the misfortune to make an indiscreet selection, the wide-spreading evil is shocking to contemplate. The bishop has, at least, eight hundred thousand souls under his care. What an awful responsibility, and, for a good man, what a god-like office! But if he should be one

* The Rev. Mr. Harte, a clergyman at Barbadoes, noted for his benevolence, after being persecuted in every possible form, for endeavouring to instruct the negroes, was finally arraigned on, if I remember correctly, a charge of high treason.

with attainments far beneath mediocrity, buoyed up with vanity, whose airs of presumption, at once overbearing and undignified, render him the object of universal ridicule, what moral influence can he exert over the community at large? What benefit can his numerous flock derive? Can any good or wise measure be hoped from one whose miserable littleness of soul leads him to regard as an object of the highest importance, as the pinnacle, indeed, of earthly happiness, the being received with the roar of cannon at every island he may visit?

Imagine the dignified position of a bishop, seated in the barge of a man-of-war, reckoning with feverish excitement the number of salvoes fired in his honour, and then complaining, with childish pettishness, that there had been ONE* discharge too few!

Do we not almost weep for poor human nature, when we hear that a bishop arriving in a port, and discovering that it was after the hour when military regulations sanctioned the firing of a salute, preferred to remain until the following morning on

* A literal fact.

board, so that then (and that too on the Sabbath) his presence might be duly announced by the thunder of artillery; interrupting the religious ceremonies of the day, assembling together all the idle of the station, and needlessly and cruelly harassing the troops, who are compelled to march several miles under a tropical sun, for the purpose of forming a guard of honour? But do we not more than weep, if upon its pleasing Providence to inflict an awful hurricane upon a portion of the diocese, casting thousands and tens of thousands naked and beggars upon the public streets,—do we not, I repeat, more than weep, if we find a bishop, so far from endeavouring to stay the effects of the mighty calamity, increasing them a hundred-fold by his insane and dangerous measures? If appointed a *distributor* of the funds so generously accorded by the British public in aid of the suffering thousands, does he correctly discharge his sacred duty in granting large sums to planters* in

* A singular reason was advanced by the colonists for aiding the planter in preference to the slave, viz. that the latter being the former's *property*, the more he was maimed or reduced by sickness, the greater the former's loss, and *ergo*, that the planter should

absolute affluence, in insisting that other large sums should be expended in beautifying *his* churches, or in other words, feeding his vanity, at the very moment so many hapless blacks were rotting in the highways, without one hand being stretched out to relieve their misery, or any prospect of receiving one farthing of what the people of England chiefly intended for them, the most numerous and the most helpless? And when checked in these proceedings by the head of the government, what words are sufficiently strong to apply to the man who could circulate pamphlets upon the subject, thereby compelling the governor to publish a reply in the newspapers, to counteract the perilous intent of the episcopal attack?

What a spectacle! What an example to the community! The king's representative and a bishop in *public* collision, and in collision on such a subject!

With an example like this, little can be expected from the inferior clergy, save neglect of

receive accordingly!! Had it not been for the energetic measures of Sir Lionel Smith, this abominable doctrine would have been carried into effect.

their spiritual functions, and indecent interference in worldly matters. It is lamentable to observe the eagerness with which, in the West Indies, they enter the arena of angry discussion, and how constantly the colonial journals are filled with effusions penned by clerical gentlemen, breathing a spirit the very reverse of what should be expected from teachers of Christianity, while at the same time they convey no very elevated idea of the literary attainments of West India clergymen.

I am not desirous of pursuing this subject; the reader's own feelings will determine how far instruction to their flocks can be expected from characters like these.*

We will now proceed to take a survey of the legal profession in the colonies. Almost every island is graced with its first judge, and its second judge, its Attorney-General, and its Solicitor-General, with barristers and attorneys to repletion.

* If the reader can obtain a few Demerara papers, it will be worth his while to peruse some productions therein, signed "W. W. Harman," rector of St. Swithin's parish, in which is comprised that portion of district D. from Plantation Best to La Grange, inclusive.

Government have extreme difficulty in inducing gentlemen of any talent or reputation at the English Bar, to accept even the highest professional appointments in the West Indies, as, independently of the noxious climate, and still more noxious society, to which they would be exposed, the different salaries have been reduced to so miserable a pittance, that the holders, so far from being enabled to lay up a trifle for the winter of life, would find it barely possible to exist with common respectability. Thus the individuals filling important legal offices, are too often personally connected with the colonies, by possessing therein sugar plantations, which consideration alone has led them to take the situations; or they are of so ruined a fortune, perhaps reputation, as to render an absence from their country desirable. In either case it may be doubted whether they are exactly the characters to mete out justice, "without partiality, favour, or affection." But the evil stops not here. In their train follow a band of satellites, whom it would indeed be impossible to paint to the life. They resemble that class of persons quaintly

designated in England hedge-attorneys; and as their briefs come wholly from the planters, who have likewise the power of distributing, what is even more esteemed, martial rank,* they are prepared to find good law for every act of villany and oppression. Against these odds, what can avail the voice of the poor negro, crying for redress?

From these people good breeding or refinement cannot be looked for; rude and boisterous contradictions must be expected and pardoned; but notwithstanding my being thus prepared, I confess I could not witness without amazement the extraordinary scenes occasionally exhibited in their courts of justice—scenes to which, in comparison, those at our own Middlesex Sessions, or even those

* This will be better understood when I speak in a future chapter of the West India mania for a gold-laced jacket. Thus Mr. J——, of the Trinidad Bar, the Sir James Scarlett of the Port of Spain Sessions, and indeed a clever enough attorney on the principle that "*dans le royaume des aveugles un borgne est le roi*," is in a state of misery until he can exchange his wig for a helmet, and his gown for a magnificent fancy dress, which he believes an uniform. He is then Colonel J——, Aide-de-Camp to the Governor, and it is delightful to observe on those occasions his patronizing air towards his Majesty's officers, and his lisping regret that his military rank did not permit him to notice, as he should wish, the "*subalterns*" of the army.

at the Recorder's Court at Cork, shine resplendent *with dignity. The lie is frequently given from the* Bench to the Bar, and of course retorted from the Bar to the Bench; the Secretary for the Colonies has frequent appeals from the mutual recriminators, and the Governor-General of the islands is occasionally called upon to suspend a judge.*

All, therefore, is anarchy, violence, and vulgarity, in the higher courts, and increased anarchy, violence, and vulgarity, in the minor. Sometimes one magistrate orders the constables to conduct a brother magistrate to the jail; while he that is thus sentenced seizes the constable by the throat, and defies his enemy to fulfil the threat. All this in the presence of numerous gangs of slaves, whom the party to which these well-conducted gentlemen belong represent as inaccessible to reason, and to whom subordination or obedience

* "The judges in the West Indies are totally inefficient to execute the great purposes of justice." "Their inefficiency is of a twofold nature, viz. they are ignorant of the law, and are mingled up with the local prejudices and feelings of the places in which they are called to administer justice."—*Lord Glenelg's Speech in the House of Lords, March* 11, 1836. These pages were written in 1834.

to the laws cannot be taught. The following extract from a journal, detailing one of these occurrences, will amply corroborate what I have advanced:—

"Mr. Daniel Hart appeared before *Dr. Madden* this day, charging an apprentice with a robbery to the amount of five shillings.

"*Dr. Madden.*—There is not a shadow of proof against the accused, and I shall at once discharge him.

"*Mr. Hart.*—I am a magistrate, and—

"*Dr. Madden.*—I cannot permit you, nor any one else, to come into my court and attempt to browbeat me by violence. You must conduct yourself with propriety, or I shall insist on your leaving the office.

"*Mr. Hart.*—I will not leave the office until I please. I AM A MAGISTRATE AS WELL AS YOU, and will remain until I choose to go.

"*Dr. Madden.*—You shall not, if you conduct yourself improperly. Constables, put Mr. Hart out of the office.

"*Mr. Hart* (to the constables).—Put me out, if

you dare. Recollect I am one of your employers. I am as good as Dr. Madden.

"*Dr. Madden.*—Constables, I call upon you, and upon all present who are special constables, *to put Mr. Hart out.*

"The constables stared and stood motionless. Dr. Madden called upon Mr. Mitchell, the reporter for the *Despatch*, and who is a special constable, to put Mr. Hart out. Upon Mr. M. going up to Mr. Hart, Mr. H. seized him by the collar, and gave him in charge to the constables, with orders to take him to the cage; and they would certainly have done so, had not Dr. Madden gone out into the piazza and rescued him!"

Before the reader has recovered from his astonishment at this truly West Indian forensic scene, I will plunge him into still greater by introducing to his acquaintance a celebrated judge of one of the colonies.

Through what channel he obtained the appointment, I will not stop to inquire; suffice it to say that he was an Irishman, piqued himself upon his Hibernian humour and accent, and burned to rival

in facetiousness the renowned Lord Norbury of punning fame. This might have been tolerably harmless; but he was at the same time one of the most dissolute characters in existence: living publicly with a harlot; drunk at all periods; night after night found insensible from liquor in the public streets; and in the morning bearing even on the judgment-seat the marks of recent and beastly debauchery. Can the mind of man imagine a more degrading spectacle than that of such a person pronouncing the stern sentence of the law?

One anecdote of his judicial conduct in court will be sufficient.

A respectable individual appeared before him, to give evidence in an important suit. He was unfortunately severely crippled and maimed from wounds received, as I was told, in the service of his country. What an excellent subject for the judge's ribaldry—for the judge's wit!

After mimicking and confusing the poor man for a length of time, he gravely inquired his name.

"Parrymore, my lord," was the reply.

"A pretty fellow, by Jasus, to be a paramour,"

responded "my lord;" "I would lave my wife night and day with you for all the harm you could do to her. A paramour, indeed! and bad luck to your sowl."

This wit was superhuman. The judge brogued *out a true Milesian shout; the bar shook with ecstasy; the spectators left in disgust*; and the poor victim of this heartless buffoonery was carried out of court in a fit. *Et ainsi finit la séance.**

I will now sketch another functionary of the law, who is so truly West Indian, that from him the reader may form a correct estimate as to the habits of the Windward and Leeward high legal officers in general. He was first brought into notice by the performance of an act of benevolence towards a young gentleman, who had been so indiscreet as to affix an erroneous signature to a pecuniary

* For the credit of the colony to which I allude, I must not neglect to mention that this gentleman's habits and conduct were subsequently made a subject of investigation by the House of Assembly, which passed a resolution depriving him of his office, or, what was the same thing, stopping his salary, which compelled him to take himself from the island. But still the administration of justice must be in a low state, when such a scene as that described could by possibility occur.

document, and for which, (the law regarding it in a harsher point of view,) it was by no means unlikely he would depart somewhat ignominiously from this world of sorrows. He, however, had the good luck to possess a pretty sister, and this sister in her turn an amorous suitor, in the shape of a sprig of the law. The price of her hand, for I must do our friend the justice to say his views were honourable, was the brother's release; but the proofs against him were so clear, that the thing was considered impossible.

Our attorney, however, by a series of curious manœuvres, which for obvious reasons I must decline particularizing, further than that they were not precisely in accordance with the forms practised in the law courts of England, not only saved the life of the young man, but succeeded in bringing about a sentence which I heartily wish could have been passed upon me, viz. of banishment from the island, with permission to select any other spot on the face of the earth for his residence. All eyes were now turned upon him, and he was shortly afterwards called to the bar amidst the acclama-

tions of the community. Brief followed brief, and an incredibly short period saw him his Majesty's —— —— for the island of ——.

How well he deserved this exalted station, how justly merit is rewarded in these virtuous colonies, will sufficiently appear by a trait I am about to narrate, selected from many of a similar nature. By some means he contracted acquaintance with a sergeant of the —— regiment of foot, who had lately married a young woman in a superior line of life. She possessed various articles of dress no longer adapted to her position when she became the wife of a soldier; and some of these were purchased by the lawyer for *ten pounds eight shillings*.

The sergeant called in a few days for the money, but was informed by the legal gentleman that his wife had gone on a visit to a neighbouring island, and requested that payment might be deferred until her return, which was at once acceded to. Private theatricals were at this time in vogue; the chief performers being the lawyer and the sergeant. At rehearsal one morning, the man of

law exclaimed to him of the halbert, "By the bye, I believe your wife possesses two slaves; take care you have them duly registered." The same advice was repeated at a second and a third rehearsal.

The lawyer's wife returned; the sergeant again solicited the amount of the debt. "It is but just," was the reply; "here is our running account," presenting him the following bill:—

To goods sold Mrs. ——	£10	18	0
To three consultations respecting your slaves, at one doubloon each	10	8	0
Balance due to you . . .	0	10	0

which balance he had the assurance to hand over to the poor soldier, who quitting the island on the following day was prevented from seeking redress. This was related as an admirable specimen of cleverness; and without doubt the perpetrator, before these pages see the light, will be a judge.

Far be it from me to insinuate that acts of this description are performed and approved by all, without exception. God forbid! There are, I rejoice to say, some members of the law in the West Indies,

who would honour any society, and whose legal attainments would be distinguished even among the distinguished lawyers of England. I need only mention Mr. Scotland, the judge of Trinidad. But, alas! men like him are rare; and the manner in which he is reviled by the colonists, and his plans for the public good rendered abortive, while it confirms my assertions, is a proud testimony of his worth and excellence.

Although in some degree anticipating more important matters, yet as the subject is connected with the administration of justice, this will perhaps be an eligible opportunity of recording my impressions respecting those officers styled stipendiary magistrates, sent out to the colonies on the passing of the Abolition Bill. It was the intention of government that they should be altogether unconnected with any party; that they should be the impartial mediators between the planter and the apprentice, checking oppression on the part of the one, and the slightest tendency to insubordination on that of the other.

Nothing could have been wiser in theory than

this plan; every friend of humanity rejoiced at it, and some even of the planters were compelled to admit that, "in these days," it was perhaps advisable that punishment should be inflicted on the negro only by the direction of one, who could have no personal feelings on the subject. Bitterly do I lament to say that in practice the plan entirely failed.

The original selection of gentlemen for the office reflects the highest honour on the Colonial Secretary. Scorning the idea of deriving from the appointments an increase to private patronage, he appears to have had no other anxiety than that his nominees should be men of integrity, with the talents requisite for the office; and such seem to have been the stipendiary magistrates who were named in the FIRST instance. They arrived, determined to fulfil their instructions to the letter; and their having failed in so doing must in no shape be attributed to want of zeal or fidelity: but the cause must be looked for in those accursed local circumstances, which, as the reader must have already observed, cast so withering a blight

on all that is good, or honourable, or humane. The pitiful amount of the incomes assigned to them threw them at once on the mercy of the planters. Three hundred a year sounds well; but this sum in the West Indies is barely equal to half the same in England. In the performance of their duties, the stipendiaries are often under the necessity of travelling five and thirty miles in one day; they must, therefore, keep at least two horses, with the correspondent number of servants at exorbitant wages. After a severe journey of this nature in a tropical climate, on roads where four miles an hour is rapid travelling, exposed at one moment to storms of which nothing in Europe can give any conception, and at another to a scorching sun which no constitution can long bear with impunity, what is to become of them in a country where there are no places of public refreshment? They must depend on the charity of the planter for even a crust of bread; and will this paltry crust, or even a couch on which to repose their wearied frames, be granted, if they for one moment dare to side against their host?

Well do I remember how forcibly many of the planters portrayed these facts, previous to the arrival of the magistrates; and vivid is my recollection of the fiendish rapture with which they subsequently declared them at their mercy. Hence a large proportion of the individuals first appointed have thrown up the offices in disgust; or retaining them, and scorning to fall in with the views of the colonists, have been hurried to untimely graves by the persecutions which they had to endure. In some instances, to render the magistrates entirely the servants of the planters, an augmentation to the salaries of willing tools has been accorded by the local legislature, to be defrayed from the colonial revenue.

This fact speaks for itself; for can this addition to the incomes be viewed in any other light than that of a bribe? And how long, I demand, would this bribe be continued, if the receiver presumed to act in opposition to an influential slave proprietor? The planters have numerous methods besides this, of compassing their ends; of thwarting the best intentioned and the firmest. If they find him

proof against a bribe, callous to physical suffering, indifferent to their abuse, determined to hold out a protecting hand to the unhappy negro, and refusing to lacerate with stripes the body of some poor slave, who had perhaps declined to pander to his daughter's shame (believe me, reader, this is no imaginary case), he is at once branded with the epithet of "saint," the most opprobrious which the mind of planter can conceive, and sent to some distant, unhealthy part of the colony, there to rot in disease and despair.

When they have once killed or driven off any whose uprightness and humanity stood in their way, the different vacancies are at once filled up, *pro tempore*, by the authorities on the spot. The new nominees are strongly recommended to the government at home as individuals perfectly qualified, "being well acquainted with the negro character." The appointments are generally confirmed; and I undertake to prophesy that long before the conclusion of these sketches, the planters will have gradually succeeded in obtaining magistrates of their own clique, men ready to

cover with the pretended sanction of the law the most cruel, the most vindictive, the most oppressive of systems. The ink on my paper was scarce dry, when I learned with what fearful rapidity my prophecy is drawing to its fulfilment.* In defiance of their instructions, in breach of the pledge given by England to the negro, certain magistrates have dared to inflict corporal punishment upon females! It is true these females were only eleven years of age; but in these climes this is almost the age of puberty.

One of the magistrates on this occasion frankly admitted that he was acting illegally, but affirmed that subordination could not be maintained without the "lash"—a sentiment truly planterian, and which secured to the utterer the countenance and confidence of every slave proprietor in the colony.

No one will rejoice more than myself if my prediction as to what the stipendiary magistrates

* See, at a subsequent page, an extract from Sir Lionel Smith's Letter to the Colonial Secretary, written near *two years* after these memoranda of mine.

will become should not be realised; unfortunately, however, each day has fortified me more and more in the belief of the correctness of my original impression.

Previous to dismissing the subject, I must mention as a proof of the animus actuating the colonists, that they are particularly anxious the magistrates should wear military uniform,* hoping thereby to frighten the negroes into a belief that they are subject to martial law. Were it not for the baseness of the motive, it would be difficult to restrain a smile on beholding Justice seated on the bench decked in scarlet, and armed with sword and spurs.

Verily, the West Indies is a place for funny as well as hideous sights. This the reader will acknowledge, if he has patience to peruse some of the following chapters.

* A magistrate of Trinidad arrived in a moment of considerable excitement. One would have imagined the governor might have examined a little into his qualifications, or have given some hints for his guidance; but the first question was, "Well, I hope you have a uniform." The reply being fortunately in the affirmative, his Excellency was perfectly satisfied with the stipendiary, and had nothing more to say.

CHAPTER IV.

Qualifications to ensure entry into the Colonial BEAU-MONDE—The different *Castes* described by a Lady-Patroness—Mulatto—Mustic—Fustic—Costic—Sambo—Utter want of Morality in both Sexes—Merchants and Store-keepers—Trait of paternal and fraternal Affection—A Domestic Tragedy.

HE who is ambitious of entering into what is designated *good society* in the West Indies, must especially be prepared to exhibit an undoubted pedigree of three generations of *white* ancestry. No German Baron, boasting lineage from Charlemagne, nor English Dowager, claiming descent from William the Conqueror, can examine with such scrutinizing eagerness the quarterings of the suitor for an alliance with their houses, as do the colonial magnates, the complexion of the candidate for their notice. No matter if for two hundred years his fathers have regularly suffered for

forgery and highway robbery, no matter if he himself, by a flaw, hath escaped the gallows, for in these points the colonists are wondrous liberal; provided he can prove his origin from an entirely *white* stock, he is hailed as a welcome addition to the fashionable assemblies, received with rapture at the levees of Trinidad, and the honour of his attendance panted for in the ball-rooms of Barbadoes; but woe, woe to the unhappy wretch, if among his ancestors can be numbered one in whose veins flowed some of the African blood; never can he hope to pass the barrier between him and these illustrious gentry! Let him be possessed of fortune, of polished manners, of spotless reputation; let him have travelled through Europe, have received and profited by an enlightened education, all these advantages will avail him nothing; hourly will he be taunted with what these European savages denominate his negro blood, and for ever will society be barred against him.* It is curious to

* Even as late as 1836, upon a Barbadoes gentleman having discovered a coloured, but truly respectable person at the ball given by Sir Lionel Smith, he immediately left the room in the highest displeasure.

observe the rapidity with which a Creole will discover shades of complexion, utterly imperceptible to the stranger. Indeed the talent of perceiving at a glance how many degrees an individual is removed from the negro, is considered of so much importance, as to form the primary part of the education of the youth of these islands; without it, the young maiden is not deemed fit "to come out," as she might, from ignorance, be daily committing errors, and perhaps lavishing smiles on those whom the laws of this excellent society have stamped as infamous.

A short time after my arrival, I witnessed an exemplification of this feeling, in a somewhat singular manner; and for the amusement and edification of the reader I will describe the circumstance in detail.

One night at a ball, I perceived an extremely pretty girl, seated, in a melancholy manner, in a corner of the room, the generality of the ladies passing her with a sneer, or with averted head. She looked so innocent, and, at the same time, so unhappy and forlorn, that I sympathized with her

evident suffering, and to remove her embarrassment, led her to the dance.

I soon saw that I had committed a solecism against fashionable manners. There was such whispering among the ladies, such flaunting of fans, such marked personal rudeness when they came in contact with me and my partner, that I was beyond measure relieved when the set was concluded. I was now shunned by the ladies, and pointed at as a species of monster.

Totally at a loss to divine why I was thus cast out of the pale of society, I availed myself of the favour with which I flattered myself to be regarded by a certain "Lady-Patroness" of the assembly, and implored from her a solution of the mystery. At first she scorned reply; but moved afterwards by my evident contrition and mortification, she at length exclaimed, "What could induce you to insult the ladies in such a manner? what put it in your head to dance with a *Costie?*"

I was now more puzzled than ever. I was well aware that fine ladies in all coteries have little pet words to describe various objects, and that occa-

sionally something very naughty may be wrapped up in something apparently very simple; but this appeared to me so far-fetched, that I at once displayed my ignorance, and confessed, with a blush, that I had never before heard the term "*Costie.*" My peace was made, my fair protectress assured the society that I had merely sinned from error, and prepared to instruct me in colonial etiquette.

"You must know, then," she said, (I repeat her expressions word for word,) "that there are different castes in the West Indies. For example:

"A Mulatto is the offspring of a black and white.

"A Mustie is the offspring of a white and a mulatto.

"A Fustie is the offspring of a mustie and a white.

"And a Costie, you wicked man, is the offspring of a fustie and a white. You have therefore committed a crime to-night almost as heinous as if you had selected for a partner a Sambo, which all the world knows is the offspring of a mulatto and a black."

Expressing repentance for my fault, and gratitude for the lesson, I took my leave; and as I doubt not the reader is perfectly satisfied with this proof of refinement and liberality among the Lady-Patronesses of the West Indian Almacks, I will proceed to the description of other leaders of the society.

A very exalted station is held by the tradesmen of the different islands, or, as I should more properly term them, the *store-keepers;* for it would be an affront of the deepest dye to designate their shops by other than the epithet of store. Many of these gentlemen possess sugar estates; have heavy mortgages on most of the properties; are slave-owners, and consequently, in every sense of the word, planters, as well as tradesmen. These are indeed men of might; all the ready money of the colonies is in their possession; and one word from them would imprison half the settlements. They and their clerks constitute chiefly the exquisites of the West Indies; for them sigh the love-sick Creoles; for them manœuvre the match-making mammas. They are the stewards of every

ball; the setters of every fashion; "the observed of all observers." A stranger unaware of the importance of these characters, is not a little surprised on entering, for the first time, one of the stores, and purchasing an article at a tithe of the sum originally demanded, to receive an invitation to dinner, in terms protecting and condescending, from the not very cleanly, nor particularly honest personage behind the counter. Unhappy man, if he exhibit astonishment, or fail to acknowledge, with gratitude, the attention! A cartel would be the inevitable result; for these gentry are mighty punctilious in points of honour; and notwithstanding their surcharges and uncouthness of appearance, the shopmen standing behind the counter are nobles of the land, perhaps bearing the high sounding rank of the Honourable Charles Sugar Cane, Member of His Majesty's Council; or Lieutenant-General Molasses, Commandant of the Royal Plantation Hussars!

So it is; in the shops of the West Indies are to be found more Honourables than ever attended a levee at St. James's; and few garrison towns in

England could array so many officers as are occasionally to be seen tippling in the rum-shops of Barbadoes and Trinidad. These things, however, would, from the man of the world, simply elicit a smile, with, perhaps, a passing sensation of regret that persons in authority should be found countenancing such wretched buffoonery; he would scorn to waste a syllable upon it; but when he finds that the vanity which prompts the folly, likewise induces the actors to thrust themselves upon the public as the possessors of every excellent quality, as such claiming its sympathy, and creating in their favour a powerful party, it behoves him to raise loudly his voice in the cause of outraged truth.

I freely admit that I experience some reluctance in disclosing the arcana of the *private* life of the colonists, and should have paused before I removed the veil, had it not been for the effrontery with which, by themselves and partisans, their praises have been re-echoed to the very skies. According to them, vice is only known in the West Indies by report; the ladies are all chaste, and the

men perfect Josephs. Mrs. Carmichael,* in her work, entitled "Domestic Manners in the West Indies," advances rather a facetious reason for this freedom from commission of certain peccadilloes, namely, that the construction of the houses is such as to render a discovery inevitable. Some cynics might be disposed to place no very great reliance on that virtue which is only preserved by peculiarities of architecture; but as I am willing to attribute this admission to accident on the part of the fair authoress, I will not dilate upon it; but when she proceeds to declare that immoral habits† are no where to be found among the colonists, and that the tone of morals among both sexes is much MORE strict than in what is termed genteel society in England, I cannot exhibit the same indulgence: and I trust I may, without the

Let me be understood as not having the most distant wish of speaking disrespectfully of this lady: I comment on her work as one emanating entirely from the colonists, and merely ushered into the world for peculiar reasons under her name. All my strictures, therefore, and accusations of want of veracity, are levelled at the *authors* of "Domestic Manners in the West Indies;" that work being a joint-stock concern of MANY.

† Vide page 59, vol. i. of "Domestic Manners."

charge of indecency, lift up a gauntlet thrown down with such arrogance.

Without longer preamble, I fearlessly assert, that this description of the state of morality in *the West Indies is not only incorrect in every* point, but that it is almost out of human possibility that chastity *can* exist among the female population of the whites, owing to the licentious examples which are presented to them from their very childhood. Now to facts—facts notorious to all who have had the misfortune of residing in these colonies. Almost every unmarried man on his first arrival, whether a stripling from school, or one whose appearance and grey hairs denote a speedy gathering to his fathers, forms a connexion with a negro or coloured girl, who, for the time, (for he is constantly changing) bears his name, is openly seen at the windows of his residence, and resides with him until it suits his views to marry. Hence it comes to pass, that scarcely an European is without relatives, the offspring of these connexions. A young lady, on becoming a wife, finds herself at once the stepmother of a large

family of mulattoes; and a married woman, arriving from England unexpectedly, sees her husband surrounded by harlots, many of them evincing proofs of approaching maternity. The mother is introduced in like manner to the prostitute of her son, and the sister to that of her brother. Is it in the nature of things that the female mind can remain long uncontaminated amidst scenes like these? Farther even than this; so little in this corrupted clime is chastity regarded, that passing unnoticed the disgusting shamelessness with which adultery is perpetrated and applauded, I have known fathers—yes, *fathers*—compel their daughters to associate familiarly with their mistresses, and allow these strumpets, *en famille*, to claim precedency over their legitimate European offspring. I am not harsh enough to deny that these unhappy girls MAY continue virtuous, MAY remain unpolluted in the veriest stews of corruption; still the probability is, I should imagine, that mind and body must be irretrievably lost! That I may not be considered as drawing on my imagination for these frightful pictures, I will ask

the organ of the colonists, already alluded to, whether she can dispute in the minutest points these details, and whether she be not acquainted, and that intimately, with many to whom my remarks will apply? Knows she any thing of the subjects of the following anecdote?—

An influential gentleman was in company with his son, when intelligence was brought that his only daughter, from whom he had been estranged for years, had that moment arrived in the harbour. One would have imagined that paternal and fraternal feelings would have carried them on wings to the vessel: but no!—these two amiable relatives entered into a violent discussion as to which belonged the duty of conducting the young lady on shore: each apprehending that he who fulfilled this task would be considered responsible for the passage money. The object of this heartless and unnatural altercation was suffered to remain on board three days, without one female friend, or other associates than the mates of the vessel. Shame at length effected what principle could not, and the brother condescended to offer an asylum

to his sister. Eventually, however, he pronounced her maintenance too expensive, and compelled the father to receive her. This latter was a reckless profligate, his house an absolute brothel; and here did a brother permit his innocent sister to seek refuge; and here have I seen the unhappy girl, the picture of despair, surrounded by the bastards and the strumpets of her own parent! Where persons thus acting are courted and respected, surely one may be permitted to question whether that state of society can possibly merit the glowing praises lavished upon it by the authors of "Domestic Manners in the West Indies;" and if those authors still persist in believing their praises well founded, I thank my God from the bottom of my heart that they and I have studied morality in widely different schools. Numerous, I grieve to say, are the tales which I could unfold on this particular subject; but I really shrink from employing all the materials I have at hand, being anxious to spare, as much as possible, the feelings of the reader. I shall therefore limit myself to one more anecdote only, which, if I do not greatly

err, will be found to equal in depravity any act which the annals of sin record.

In one of the islands resided a family, consisting of a father, daughter, and son, possessed of wealth, and holding a leading position in society. On a sudden, reports of a dreadful nature were circulated on the subject of the father and daughter. These were not, however, sifted, and she eventually became the unwedded mother of an infant, whose fate is yet involved in mystery.

One would have imagined vice could scarcely have been carried farther, but subsequent occurrences were destined to prove that the family as yet were in the very infancy of crime. The second lover of the lady was her brother;* the result a second infant, which, falling ACCIDENTALLY from the nurse's arms, was drowned in a neighbouring stream. The father, burning with jealousy and rancour at having been supplanted, watched eagerly the future proceedings; and birth being given to a third child, and a third murder

* I regret that the name has escaped my memory.

committed, he at once published the deed, and charged it upon his rival son. The accused addressed the judge, soliciting an immediate investigation, and stating that his friends (for the monster was possessed of friends, and without doubt of congenial souls) had counselled him to escape, but that he had refused to declare himself by such a step guilty of the heinousness imputed to him, and that he anxiously prayed to be placed upon his trial. The proper officers hastened to his residence, but he had effected his flight to the Spanish main, leaving his sister to the consolations of their virtuous father. If any thing could aggravate this unparalleled case of atrocity, it might be found in the fact that this man was at the time married to a lovely and accomplished woman, by whom he had a family of seven children. As a farther proof of the state of morals in this community, this occurrence created but trifling sensation; and although I admit few were shameless enough to defend openly the brother's conduct, still all loudly exonerated the father from the crime of incest, insisting that the young lady was not his own

child, but that of his wife, this latter having carried on an adulterous intercourse during her absence from the colony!

Let the reader pronounce whether my strictures are too severe on a society where these things are regarded as so many INDISCRETIONS, and merely talked of as the current gossip of the day.

CHAPTER V.

Private Society continued—Sir Ralph Woodford—His Efforts to introduce Refinement — The Rum Law — Anecdote — Mania among the Colonists for Military Rank—The Court at Trinidad —The Immaculate Vice-Treasurer.

It is a relief to the mind to turn from these sickening details to others of a less gloomy cast. I should not have entered upon them so fully had I not been, I may say, goaded thereto by the false and fulsome statements put forth by the colonists and their partisans, as much as by my anxiety (I trust laudable) that the British public should become really acquainted with the class who have drawn so largely upon its sympathy — its gullibility—and last, though not least, its—purse.

There is a maxim inculcating the propriety of affecting a virtue even if you have it not. Never

was precept so scorned as is this by the colonists; they appear literally to glory in their faults, and even exhibit a degree of coarseness and vulgarity which I have sometimes had difficulty in believing altogether natural. The chief topics of conversation among them are abuse of the negroes, and of all who may be supposed friendly to that injured race,—speculations as to the price of rum and sugar, and the state of the market in England. If they wish to relax a little from matters of trade, their discourse runs upon their filthy amours with slave girls, loudly boasting of the great addition their own intrigues have made to the "gang!" No attempt at refinement, no respect for the presence of females, is manifested; all is low and profligate. Many of the governors have endeavoured, as a step towards the reformation of morals, to introduce some little appearance of decency and courtesy, justly arguing that when the masters were sunk into a state so truly degraded, it would be dangerous to endeavour to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, as education would enable these latter to perceive more clearly

the worthlessness of their oppressors, and might perhaps lead them to an effort to free themselves by violence. There was one governor, who, if mortal man could have succeeded in the righteous object of bringing virtue into the haunts of vice—of cementing bonds of kindness between the slave-proprietor and the slave—of teaching them that their mutual happiness would be increased by mutual conciliation and forbearance,—if mortal man could have succeeded in this, it was the late Sir Ralph Woodford. Talented, firm, dignified, and polished; magnificent in his habits, of private character most pure; all the energies of his powerful mind were directed to the welfare of the important colony over which he was called to preside. He felt, justly, that a change there would have a correspondent effect on the remainder of the West Indies: nothing therefore was left untried by him to alter the entire tone and system of society, in his government. Precept, entreaty, example, were all employed: whether in the end he would have been able to accomplish his benevolent views, had it not pleased Providence to call him in the

prime of life to "another and a better world," must remain for ever a secret: still much was effected by him. He proceeded gradually in the cause of reform, respected existing prejudices, and almost taught the planters that a system of humanity was likewise one of sound policy. Would that the lesson had been thoroughly learned!

It is not my intention to enlarge on Sir Ralph Woodford's official proceedings, but I cannot refrain from relating one of his methods to diminish the coarseness existing in private society. He at once, on his arrival, objected to the abominable fashion, so prevalent at the time, of rum-drinking; at every party, declaring that THAT liquor should not be produced at the Government House, and that he must decline frequenting any society where it was sanctioned. This may appear a trifle to many, but those who know "what great events from trifling causes spring," or have the remotest conception of the degrading scenes daily witnessed in the West Indies from the practice of dram-drinking, will easily recognise the im-

portance of this first step in the road to refinement. When this determination was made known, it created in the colony a sensation equal to that first elicited in Paris by the celebrated ordinances of Polignac!—such meetings!—such caballing!—such threats of appealing to His Majesty in Council! The governor however was firm, and the poor injured people were compelled to remain satisfied with the best wines of Europe, and for a time to refrain from their beloved grog.

The seriousness attached to this subject by the colonists, and the vindictive feeling produced, will be perfectly portrayed in the anecdote which follows.

An individual of considerable weight and consequence in the society of the colony was deputed to communicate with the governor upon the affair, and to point out to his excellency the sentiments of the community respecting the "rum law." He selected the hour of dinner for beginning the attack. Vociferating loudly to a servant, he directed that a goblet of the precious beverage should be brought.

"There is none, Sir, in the house," was the reply.

The delegate then bawled out from one end of the table to the other, "Sir Ralph, I say, Sir Ralph; why this black scoundrel behind my chair declares that there is no rum to be had here. This will never do, Sir Ralph; the good stuff must be encouraged, or what will become of us poor planters?" How the guests chuckled: what a famous hit at the governor.

Sir Ralph, in his calm, dignified manner, answered, "When *next*, Sir, you honour me with your company, be assured you shall have no cause of complaint." Could a sentence of banishment from his society be more courteously or more severely conveyed? The rebuke was not forgotten: it long rankled in the worthless heart of him to whom it was addressed. And when the hand of death had laid the noble Woodford low, and his mortal remains were to be carried to England in spirits—at this moment, when one would have imagined all animosity even for injuries laid aside, and that the bitterest enemy during his life-

time might have shed tears over the untimely end of one so talented, so virtuous, and so generous, the reptile alluded to, with a fiendish laugh which set the table in a roar, exclaimed with imprecations which I dare not repeat, "How just a retribution, that he who abhorred the very smell of that liquor, should now go to hell in a puncheon of rum!"

I will not, by any comment of my own, weaken the horror which must attach to this impious ribald and his applauding listeners.

Notwithstanding this coarseness of manners among the colonists, they pant with extraordinary anxiety for the distinction of *military* rank, and the privilege of exhibiting a tinselled jacket. They have, therefore, formed a large force of militia, with an enormous list of colonels and generals. They seize every opportunity of appearing in costume; and to see them caparisoned in comical fancy trappings, smelling of treacle and stinking of rum, ushered into an apartment with

pomp, and responding to brilliant titles, beggars any caricature ever produced by the inimitable Cruikshank.

Hearing one day at Trinidad, that a levee was to be held, and never having been presented, I made up my mind to attend it. On the morning fixed for the ceremony, a constant discharge of ordnance was kept up from gun-fire until twelve o'clock; a line of soldiers was formed in every street, and a guard of honour over each store which had the good fortune of calling a militia-chief, master. Making my way with some difficulty through formidable bands, and hearing many witty remarks as to how much finer their uniforms were than those of the king's troops, I at length succeeded in reaching the government house. Being rather before the time, I amused myself by surveying the scene. The first conspicuous object was a pasteboard figure of a man, the size of life, pierced with innumerable bullet holes. This, I believe, was intended as an illustration of the perfection to which the colonists had arrived in pistol-shooting, at which they daily practise

with the view of becoming proficients in the noble science of duelling; or it might have been a hint as to what a satirist of their proceedings might expect. In different parts of the chamber stood huge tables, covered with tumblers and cases containing brandy, rum, and shrub. While I was puzzling my imagination as to what could be the appearance of people, whose throats were capable in this scorching clime of swallowing such fiery ingredients, the folding doors were thrown open, and in rushed tumultuously, not exactly a herd of swine, but something not unlike—the magnates of the island!—generals, colonels, majors, hussars, lancers and dragoons, artillery and infantry, with a staff that defies enumeration.

Never, never can be erased from my memory the first impression made by the motley gang. At the impulse of the moment I started back with alarm, apprehending that I had fallen among maniacs, or, at all events, a crew of inebriated masqueraders: being, however, seriously assured that they were officers, I screwed my muscles into rigidity, and prepared to mark the result.

They were arrayed in uniforms, of which it was impossible to say which was most fantastic: the strolling players of the colony might well be suspected of having let out their theatrical wardrobes for the occasion.

There were guerilla dresses, Hungarian pelisses, and improved (according to the wearers' taste) British uniforms. Grey-headed old men were habited as dashing lancers, and boys of sixteen appeared in the garb of generals. The chief* barrister of the settlement, in person the very counterpart of the lowest description of bum-bailiff, with fat, unmeaning countenance and bloated features, wore a sort of golden armour, with an aiguillette and epaulette of enormous dimensions on each shoulder; while on his breast glittered a bauble meant to represent the star of the Order of the Garter. His clerk followed him at an humble distance as squire, or aide-de-camp, modestly caparisoned as a

* I have unconsciously fallen into an error in describing this person as the "*chief* barrister;" I should have said a *leading* one. The merit of being the *chief* is on all sides conceded to Mr. Charles Warner, who, being a gentleman by birth, does not mix in these upstart follies.

colonel of hussars. There was a linen-draper as quarter-master-general, and an auctioneer as adjutant-general. Six store-keepers, or rum-sellers, appeared as Brigadiers, attended by a suite of 'prentice boys, dressed as King's aides-de-camp. The exact nature of the remaining uniforms I could not define, so plastered were they with gold and silver. I shall therefore merely observe that they were all equally magnificent, and the wearers thereof of rank equally illustrious. During some time, they in solemn majesty paced the apartment, jingling their spurs in a manner truly warlike, and striking with awe and envy us poor soldiers of His Majesty's line. At length, "impatient for the fray," they commenced an attack on the delicate refreshments, with which I have described the tables to be garnished. Demi-jean* after demi-jean vanished before these heroes. I had before heard of fire-eaters, but never until this moment could I have believed it possible for mortal man to swallow the liquid fire, quaffed with such eagerness by these generals and colonels. And now

* A bottle containing about four gallons and a half.

voices were given to them; they talked, "Heavens, how they talked!" They had lately, be it understood, been employed in the field of Mars, for which they shall receive due honour in a future chapter. By their account, the army in the Peninsula underwent less hardships than those encountered by them in the marshes of Naparima; and the troops under Sir John Moore retreated with less order at Corunna, before the French, than did they before a concourse of old women and children at Cocorite. And they contradicted each other: one general swore, by his puncheons, that *his* division had done the work, while another, in frantic language, claimed the palm for his. The chiefs were joined in the discussion by their respective staffs, and assuredly there was less confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel. Angry scowls overshadowed the countenances of all parties, and I every moment expected to witness a sanguinary combat, when fortunately the door of the presence-chamber was unclosed, and in REELED these worthies to offer their homage to that dignified representative of Majesty, better known by

the HONOURABLE appellation of the "Immaculate Vice-Treasurer."

After the levee, with the hope of burying all angry feelings, the militia officers adjourned to a tavern, where a collation was prepared, at which presided the "Immaculate Vice-Treasurer;" enlivening the scene by the exhibition of several acts of tomfoolery, and aiding in keeping up the disgusting revel by the spouting of his usual maudling orations. Here swords were actually unsheathed by the warriors, and nothing but the magic word ARREST, could have prevented their blades from being stained with blood. Peace being however once more restored, the officers remained at table until night-fall, when they quitted for the theatre, where was to be a performance, as the play-bills had it, "Under the immediate patronage of The Militia, who would on the occasion appear in full uniform." They were, of course, headed by the same "Immaculate Vice-Treasurer," under whose eye again occurred scenes, which I will not sully the paper by recording. It is enough to tell, that after noise. oaths, and blows among the men,

shrieks and fainting among the women, many members of the party hurried to the neighbouring fields with pistols, and the miserable farce was terminated by more than one fearful tragedy.

So much for court life in the West Indies; and so much for the representation of Majesty in the Island of Trinidad.*

* I may appear to have reflected with harshness on the RIGHT HONOURABLE Sir George Hill; but when I proceed to describe him a little more minutely, even his friends will acknowledge that as yet I have indeed been gentle.

CHAPTER VI.

Digression—Sir George Hill, Governor of Trinidad—Debate in Parliament — Mr. O'Connell's Opinion of Sir G. Hill—Mr. Spring Rice's—Mr. R. Gordon's—Mr. Hume's—Mr. G. R. Dawson's—Sir J. Newport's—Mr. Wilks's—Alderman Waithman's —Mr. Strickland's—Mr. D. W. Harvey's—Public Opinion as expressed through the Press.

HAVING, under the title by which he is familiarly known in the West Indies, referred so strongly to the Governor of Trinidad, I must interrupt the regular course of my sketches for the purpose of presenting a more minute delineation of Sir George Hill.

Every government in the colonies is a little despotism; consequently, on the personal character of the despot for the time being, the welfare

of thousands depends; and ...ful is the moral condition of that community where a person might "justify his delinquency by referring to the case of his judge."*

An individual opinion can carry but little weight, but some I trust will attach to the calmly expressed and well-weighed opinions of numerous representatives of the people in parliament,—opinions uttered in the face of day, and in the British House of Commons,—in the presence of the faction of which Sir George Hill had long been a prominent member, and in that of many of his relatives and personal friends, not one of whom dared to utter a syllable in his defence or favour.

For the proper understanding of the subject, it is necessary the reader should bear in mind, that at the period of the following debate in parliament, the Tories were no longer in office; and that the debate sprang out of a motion on

* *Vide* Mr. O'Connell's Speech. Strange enough, a similar case has lately occurred in Trinidad, the Treasurer having become a public defaulter.

the subject of a grant of money to the Vice-Treasurer's department in Ireland.

Mr. O'Connell said—"On a former occasion, the honourable member for Cricklade called the attention of government to the serious defalcation which had taken place in the Vice-Treasurer's office of Ireland on the part of a former Vice-Treasurer, who had been since promoted to a colonial government: he wished to know what steps had been taken upon the subject?"

Mr. Spring Rice replied — that urgent and repeated calls had been made upon Sir George Hill to render his accounts, but that he had neglected to do so, alleging that a difficulty arose from a part of his papers being in England, and a part in Ireland, and making various other excuses. At length Sir George Hill was appointed Governor of St. Vincent's, in the West Indies; and he left this country without rendering any account whatever of the public money entrusted to his care. In consequence of further applications, Sir George at last rendered in his accounts, but they were unsupported by vouchers,

and were altogether in a condition which made it impossible that they could be audited, examined, or passed. Assuming, however, that the accounts were correct, it appeared by Sir George Hill's own showing that he was in debt to the public. He had been called upon to pay the money, and put his accounts in a state so that it might be ascertained whether he was not indebted in a larger amount. Neither of these requisitions had been complied with, but he had written to the Treasury Board to say that his nephew, Mr. Hill, who was in Ireland, would pay the balance for him. Application had consequently been made to this Mr. Hill, and the only result was, that that gentleman had declared his willingness to pay the money when Sir George Hill directed him to do so. This, he supposed, Sir George had not done, for the money was still unpaid.

Mr. R. Gordon thought the late administration very reprehensible throughout the whole transaction: Sir George Hill ought not to have been appointed to so responsible and important an office as governor and chancellor of a colony. He

ought not to have been permitted to sail until he had paid the money which, by his own showing and acknowledgment, was due. The Treasury had been extremely remiss in their duty.

Mr. Hume conceived the Treasury had been extremely culpable in not settling Sir George Hill's accounts; and he took the case only as one example casually discovered in which the Treasury neglected their duty, and disregarded the public interests. Nothing could be more improper than to place a person, under Sir George Hill's circumstances, within the temptations of such appointments as those of governor and chancellor of a West India island.

Mr. G. R. Dawson would allow that the accounts of Sir George Hill had been a very long time settling. As Secretary of the Treasury he had been placed in a very delicate situation, in having to call a relative to account, but he had done every thing in his power to bring Sir George Hill to a settlement, and he failed in doing it, though he was eternally trying to do it. (The honourable member was here received with some

laughter.) Nobody had a right to cast aspersions on the character of Sir George Hill until his accounts were settled. He would undertake to say, the public would not eventually lose a shilling.

Mr. Gordon denied the doctrine of the member for Harwich, that no person had a right to employ the term "DEFAULTER" in such a case. Fifty thousand pounds of the public money had been paid by the Treasury to this person, whilst he was refusing to render any account, and setting the Treasury at defiance: and even when he would not refund what he acknowledged to be due, the late ministers appointed him to a high and responsible situation in the colonies, and permitted him to depart with the public money in his pocket. He was convinced that every man would feel that the late administration was much in fault, and that the Treasury had neglected its duty.

Sir J. Newport said, that if the honourable member (Mr. Dawson) were correct in his notion, that no man had a right to cast aspersions on Sir

George Hill until his accounts were settled, then Sir George was pretty sure of not being aspersed; for according to the conduct he had hitherto pursued, his accounts would remain unsettled for an undefinable period. He reprobated the conduct of the Treasury in issuing public money to a person who refused to obey all commands to account for what he had received. He likewise strongly remonstrated against the doctrine that the merits of such a case had any relation to the chances which the public might eventually run of losing, or not losing the money.

Mr. Spring Rice declared, that the Treasury had displaced an officer in Trinidad for similar conduct, although the public had suffered no loss.

Mr. O'Connell deprecated the conduct of the late Secretary to the Treasury, who was writing pressing letters to his relation, but never thought of stopping the issue of the money. Who could tell what further nest-eggs of the sort were yet undiscovered! A person guilty of such conduct ought never to have been placed at the head of

an Equity Court, where a person might justify his delinquency by referring to the case of the judge.

Mr. Wilks thought Sir George Hill had disqualified himself for his situation, and he trusted that the present government would do its duty better than its predecessors.

Mr. G. R. Dawson defended the department, and *could not but blame* Sir G. Hill.

Mr. Hume deprecated the doctrine, that men might receive and use the public money with impunity, because their friends would assert, in the House of Commons, that the public would not ultimately lose by such conduct. The whole case of Sir George Hill was one of EMBEZZLEMENT in the very strongest sense of the word.

Mr. O'Connell insisted that Sir George Hill had no right whatever to touch the money in which he was deficient, and if it were not immediately paid, he should certainly move an address to the king for Sir George Hill's removal.

Mr. Alderman Waithman reprehended the promotion of a PUBLIC DEFAULTER to another appoint-

ment, in order to enable him to pay back the money which he had embezzled.

Mr. Strickland maintained that the conduct of Sir George Hill was nothing short of actual embezzlement.

Mr. Hume proceeded to enforce the charge at some length, alleging that he was perfectly justified in looking upon the offence of which Sir George Hill appeared to have been guilty, as a direct case of embezzlement and malversation.

Mr. D. W. Harvey animadverted in strong terms on the conduct of Sir George Hill. The parties who were every day mentioned in police reports as sent to trial for embezzlement, were infinitely more excusable than a public man of high political connexions. Any rogue who happened to be detected, would be willing to make a compromise afterwards.

Such were the opinions of the public, as expressed by their representatives in Parliament; let us now see how far these opinions were shared in by the press of the day.

The most influential organ thus records its sentiments:—

"The case of Sir George Hill came before the House of Commons last night.

"This is a most discreditable transaction to the late government. Here was a public defaulter, who had been, by the statement of his own relative, applied to frequently and fruitlessly for money which was due to the public service from him, the head of the whole treasury department of Ireland; and yet the ministers of the day appointed the same defaulter to the government of a West India colony, where he would have, and has actually, to perform the financial and judicial functions of Chancellor, as well as that of Representative of the Crown. We observe that neither Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Dawson's brother-in-law, nor Mr. Goulbourn, late member for Armagh, ventured to say one word in favour of the appointment.

"But it is obvious to the world, that either Sir George Hill must instantly be recalled, or the present ministers become accessories to the culpable conduct of those who went before them, and every man of yet unblemished reputation, holding a government under the Crown of England, will, if

he respects himself, feel it necessary to resign his office."

Again, we find the subject reverted to in these terms:—

"We insert the letter of an indignant subaltern in office on the conduct of the late Vice-Treasurer for Ireland, Sir George Hill, and the attempts which are made to cloak his peculation. If Mr. Dawson will undertake, that ultimately the people shall not lose the money, why has he not advanced already the money for his relative, and trusted to his own importunity to procure repayment to himself, rather than thus suffer the country to be the loser? Of course when Mr. Dawson pledges himself for repayment, he means that of interest as well as principal.

"But what we complain of chiefly is, that this Sir George Hill should have been suffered to go out to so important a situation as that of Governor of a West India Island. Every servant of His Majesty, who knew of this defalcation at the time of the appointment, betrayed his trust; and if he were a Privy Counsellor, we should con-

ceive even neglected to pay due observance to his oath.

"Mr. Dawson says now, that whilst Secretary to the Treasury, he had been continually badgering Hill to settle his account, but in vain. Did Mr. Dawson state that fact to the head of the Government, when he heard of the new and more important appointment?"

The following is the substance of the letter which called forth the preceding article:—

"If any thing were wanting to show the necessity of reform, and consequent rigid control over those to whom the public money is entrusted, the disgraceful disclosure in the House of Commons respecting the conduct of a late Vice-Treasurer in Ireland, must convince all but those who in high situations fatten on the vitals of the people. To the indignant feelings which such an exposure engenders, succeed those of contempt for the lame efforts of certain persons connected with the defaulter in question, to soften down acts of flagrant delinquency and embezzlement into 'confused state of accounts,' 'balance owing,' &c. &c.

"Had any unfortunate subaltern in the Treasury been similarly 'confused,' ay, even had his confusion only amounted to fifty pounds, disgrace and immediate loss of his situation would have been the consequence. He would be sent to a COLONY, but it would be such a one as would hand his name down to infamy. Is it not shameful injustice, then, that in the case of a great man, and for a great sum, embezzlement should be smoothed into 'confusion of his accounts,' and fraud into 'deficiency *pro tem.*'"

Can a colony thrive under such a ruler? Is such a ruler a fit representative for the Majesty of Great Britain?

These questions I hope yet to hear answered in the Senate of my country.

CHAPTER VII.

Class from which the Public Functionaries are selected—The Principles of these—The Duke of Wellington's Friend M'Sawnie—An Overseer—A Manager—A Planter—The Climax.

I HAVE already observed, in a cursory way, that rank and power in the West Indies are only to be acquired in proportion to the candidate's possession of, or influence over, sugar plantations. There are few *bonâ fide* proprietors resident on the spot; the greater part of the estates are mortgaged to nearly their full value, and are superintended by some of the mortgagees, or their agents.

These people have no idea beyond grinding out of the property the largest possible sum in the shortest possible period, perfectly indifferent to the eventual ruin they must entail by the over-

working of the soil, and having no sympathy for the slaves, whom they literally regard as cattle: they think alone of the present gain to themselves. From this sordid and heartless race are selected the generality of the public functionaries, such as Members of Council, Representatives in the Houses of Assembly, Officers of Militia, Commandants and Justices of districts. They are a formidable band, firmly united against the advocates for the abolition of slavery. They are especially careful to fill every department over which they possess power, with relatives or followers of their own way of thinking, by which means they have long rendered it extremely difficult for the Home Government to legislate with effect in behalf of the slave, in opposition to the powerful body by whom that slave is not only regarded as property, but over whose life they almost demand control.

It may not be uninstructive to learn something respecting the origin of these colonial law-makers, who, in their humane and enlightened circle, when discoursing on the advantages of slavery, and

glowingly describing that blessed condition as far preferable to that of the labouring peasantry in England,* find themselves at each pause greeted with shouts of approval, and held up as gifted with more than Ciceronian eloquence and more than the philanthropy of a Howard; nor will it prove less edifying to the stranger to have pointed out to him the first steps of the magical path leading to such magnificent ends, transforming sugar-boilers and rum-distillers into senators, and conveying a general's sword into the hand yet hot from scourging a negro's back.

* An itinerant mountebank from Scotland, literally made a tour in the West Indies, where public dinners were given to him, when he descanted in the above feeling and sensible strain.

On one occasion he proposed the health of "his friend the Duke of Wellington, who would soon be in, and see justice done to the planters," &c.

Perceiving that a military gentleman present (and than whom does not breathe a more loyal one) had not joined in the hallooing, and now left his wine untasted, he peremptorily demanded the cause. "I would willingly drink his Grace's health, as I venerate him; but I will not toast him as your friend, doubting whether you have even ever spoken to him: at all events, I am assured he would scorn the principles which you are striving by inference to affiliate upon him."

"Turn him out," was loudly vociferated, "he will not drink to *M'Sawnie's* friend." The gentleman quietly retired. I only wonder how he found himself among such rabble, and how he was permitted to escape with life.

A young man from the dregs of the populace, forced by poverty or by crime to abandon his own country, works his passage to the West Indies.

Having, by his conduct on board, given satisfaction to the master of the vessel, he is by him recommended to some partner of the firm with which he trades. This latter engages him as a servant to look after horses and mules, and fixes him on a sugar estate. After serving for some time in this capacity, and having had the tact to evince hatred of every thing "nigger," and to be constantly complaining of the idleness and obstinacy of those "*damned black fellows*," he is considered eligible for a more elevated post. Armed with a whip, he is placed in charge of a section of slaves, whose work he is to superintend from morning till night, and is dignified with the appellation of OVERSEER.

Springing from the class which we have mentioned, entrusted for the first time with authority, and authority, too, of no trifling description, utterly ignorant of, and despising the nature and dialect of the unhappy beings doomed to his care,

firmly believing that the negro is far removed from the pale of humanity, he is hurried into acts of cruelty, (his weapon and badge of office, the aforesaid whip, being always at hand,) of which it needs no great power of imagination to form an idea, as well as of the rapidity with which, at this employment, a naturally rugged and unfeeling disposition becomes thoroughly and irrevocably brutalized.

We will suppose him to have held this appointment some years, and to have fulfilled its duties with firmness and zeal, that is, lacerating the bodies of the gang, to evince the former, and proving the latter by robbing them even of sleep,* for the purpose of concocting a few extra puncheons of rum. He is rewarded accordingly,—behold him a MANAGER!

* In the year 1827, so enormous a quantity of sugar was made in Trinidad, on the estate of a Mr. ——, (an Honourable, of course, and Member of Council,) that a very intelligent calculator demonstrated by facts and figures, that to have made this quantity, the slaves could not by possibility have enjoyed four hours' rest out of the twenty-four, during a period of many, many months!

Injured, hapless race! And these men are to receive compensation, and yet to retain you six long years in bondage.

His fame has been circulated far and wide. The number of hogsheads of sugar fabricated on such an estate is the theme of every tongue: it becomes an important object to secure his services, and some *proprietor*, wishing to return to Europe, believes he cannot do better than place his estate under the care of so meritorious an individual, not having the remotest conception of the means by which this reputation has been acquired; for in justice to the *bonâ fide* proprietor, I must acknowledge, that I do not think he would knowingly confide his slaves to a cruel and oppressive manager; when on the spot himself, I have generally observed him kind, and his people happy and contented.* His fault lies in placing so

* It is truly gratifying to observe the happiness pervading some estates on which the *proprietors* reside. Take for example the Hope, in the Island of Tobago, owned by C. F. Franklin, Esq. a highly talented and accomplished gentleman of the old school. Maugre the forebodings of many of the colonists, no parent could have acted more tenderly towards his children than Mr. Franklin has towards *his slaves*, of which, by-the-bye, he has seen four generations.

He is even now rewarded by the improvement of his property, which increased, and increasing, will descend to his heirs uncursed by a tear or groan.

many fellow-creatures under the control of a person, respecting whose MORAL character he has neglected to inquire, and this fault has been punished by RUIN.

But to return from this digression: our manager now commences business on his own account; his talents rise with his position; he lays by a small sum every year; he employs the slaves of the estate for his own private purposes, such as building houses, of which he disposes; or he hires them (the slaves) out at so much per head, never giving credit to the master for the sums thus gained, nor for the labour lost to his immediate property. To account for the deficit which soon begins to appear, he pens plausible epistles to his defrauded employer, declaring that the slaves will not work; that the methodists are ruining them. Not a shadow of suspicion is awakened in the mind of the poor

Long, for the sake of humanity, may this excellent man be spared; but when it does please the Almighty to bring him to that dread moment, when all the vanities of this world pass away, he will be found tranquil and prepared, solaced by the blessed hope of being rendered a participator of that holy abode, promised to the just, the humane, and the charitable.

absentee; HIS friends, whom he consults, are in the habit of receiving similar communications from THEIR managers, and he tries to remain tranquil, convinced he may reckon on the fidelity of him to whom his property has been confided.

Our adventurer, under the semblance of amiable, disinterested feelings, now permits his salary to remain year after year in his employer's hands; "he hopes that better days will arrive, and that he may then receive it without putting his patron to inconvenience."

Unforeseen circumstances at length compel him to press for it at an "untoward" period, and in payment, he consents (still carrying on the farce of disinterestedness) to accept a mortgage on the property; a second and third mortgage speedily follow, and he becomes, to all intents and purposes, what is implied by the word PLANTER.

His mind is now enlarged with a witness, and the whilom slave-whipper forms plans to represent a district of the colony. Fortune still befriends him; he is elected a Member of the House of Assembly, and becomes a popular orator; and when

the proprietor, at length awakened from his fatal trance, and whose decline in the world has been in exact progression with the other's rise, hastens to the West Indies with the hope of retrieving some trifle from the wreck of his once noble fortune, he finds his quondam mule-keeper, overseer, and manager, a Member of the Colonial Council, an Honourable, a Colonel of Militia, perhaps the acting Representative of Majesty itself, potent enough to treat his victim's menaces with scorn, and to get his ill-gotten gains confirmed to him by the solemn award of the law, pronounced by one of his own satellites, whom, for the occasion, he has elevated from a grocer's counter to the judgment seat.

These portraits will at once be recognised, and many hundreds will claim the honour of having specially sat to me; but as I do not wish to create envy by particularizing, I shall leave the claimants to arrange the affair among themselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

Glance at the former Treatment of Slaves—Maxim of the Planters —How acted upon — Anecdote — No Instruction allowed the Negroes—An Idiom formed for them—Motives—All Religious Ceremonies scorned—A Funeral among the Whites—Error of the Anti-Slavery Party—Gratitude owed to the Missionaries —Their excellent Doctrines—Mrs. Carmichael's Calumnies — Character and Demeanor of the Methodist Preachers.

HAVING presented a brief outline of the state of private society among the colonists, and thereby in some degree prepared the reader for what must be expected from such characters, when they come to lord it over slaves, I will endeavour to render apparent, as far as my feeble powers will admit, the abominable nature of the system still pursued towards those hapless beings. So much has been already written upon this topic, while the state-

ments have been so opposite, that the difficulty and delicacy of the task I have undertaken rise before me in full force. By some I shall be reviled for betraying too many of the secrets of the "prison-house;" by others, with much greater justice, for revealing too few. I scorn, however, the idea of attracting attention by highly-coloured or exaggerated descriptions, or by the repetition of horrors culled from works published for mere party purposes; truth alone shall be my guide, and I will follow her with calmness, and perfect freedom from prejudice. In accordance with this principle, I commence with at once admitting, that of late years the colonists have been the objects of some little misrepresentation, inasmuch as they have been charged with acts at which the buccaneers of old would have almost paused. This has been unjust, as *by comparison* with those of former days, the colonists of the present are in the high road to civilization and humanity.

The torturing of slaves, (that is, what *we* understand generally by the expression, with the rack, thumb-screw, &c.) so familiarly practised in

the olden time, has long been discontinued. Those numerous instruments for the mutilation of the human frame, and without which a planter's establishment would formerly have been pronounced imperfect, are now preserved only as objects of curiosity, and not for hourly employ. A master can scarcely in these days flog a negro to death with the certainty of an instantaneous and honourable acquittal by a jury of Englishmen, on the ground, that the slave being his property, it was not probable he could have intended to impoverish himself, and that the death must in consequence be viewed as the effect of an accident, for which the *planter* merited pity rather than blame! Advertisements are no longer to be seen in the colonial gazettes, or posted on the doors of the house of God, offering high rewards to those who should bring in, "*dead* or alive," certain slaves who had absconded, so that if alive they might be made to expire under excruciating torments*

* Behold what a French author (Labat, vol. v. p. 44) says of the punishment inflicted in the English colonies formerly on slaves: —"Ceux qui sont pris sont condamnés à être passés au moulin,

as examples to the remainder of the gang; or if dead (surely the inference is not overstrained), the masters might yet glut their demon passions by the mutilation of the corpses! These, and thousands upon thousands of like atrocities, to which for so many years the slaves were doomed, and which I will not disgust the reader by dwelling upon, are now, thanks to the God of mercies, known in our colonies only by tradition.

Cheerfully do I bear this testimony in favour of the improved habits of the British planters of the nineteenth century, still I must not conceal that much remains yet to be accomplished by them before they can lay the remotest claim to the character of benevolent, merciful, or in fine, CHRISTIAN masters. I must even proceed further, and declare, that the system yet pursued by them is one at which every man, whose heart is not dead to all feeling of religion and humanity,

brulés tout vifs, ou exposés dans des cages de fer qui les serrent, de manière qu'ils ne peuvent faire aucun mouvement, et en cet état on les attache à une branche d'arbre où on les laisse périr de faim et de rage. On appelle cela, 'Mettre un homme au sec.'"

must shudder; and that deeds are even now done, which although sinking into insignificance when compared with those just glanced at, never cross my memory without curdling my very blood with horror.

Previous, however, to specifying some of these, it is essential I should explain the principles which the planters have laid down for their guidance in all matters relating to the slaves: without this, the reader might experience difficulty in comprehending by what process they bring themselves to eradicate those sentiments of humanity which are generally believed indigenous to the hearts of Englishmen.

From generation to generation it has been handed down to them, that with "A HAND OF IRON ALONE CAN THE NEGRO BE KEPT IN SUBJECTION." In this axiom, they imagine, is condensed the essence of the profoundest policy; it is never absent from their minds; it forms the groundwork of their every act. By never appealing but to coercion, they have taught themselves to look upon their slaves as brutes without souls,

will gravely argue to that effect, and really seem to believe, that because it has pleased the Almighty to bestow upon a race of men a complexion adapted to resist the heat of their native clime, those men were predestined to toil for the gratification of their oppressors' passion for gain, and that it is but just and reasonable these men should be doomed to everlasting bondage; to life without hope, and to labour without reward. Thus people, who in England are considered kind and beneficent — who really are such in their domestic circles, proving themselves, on all occasions, good masters to their European menials—no sooner mix with slaves, than they permit their humane feelings to disappear for ever, and those of demons to usurp the place, and in so acting steadfastly believe they best consult their own safety and advantage. "WITH A HAND OF IRON ALONE can the negro be kept in subjection" is the reply to every counsel and remonstrance; and assuredly no theory was ever so perseveringly, or so systematically, carried into practice.

Conformably thereto, the negro is from his

earliest infancy exposed to every species of outrage and mortification most likely to break his spirit: the treachery, the heartlessness, the ingratitude of his race, are the continued subjects of discourse before him,—no opportunity is lost of displaying to him that, in the estimation of his owner, he is far inferior to the beast of the field; never is he spoken to in the accents of kindness; never hears he a desire conveyed in the form of a request. "You black scoundrel, do this;"—"You cursed niggar, come here,"—are among the benignest of the forms of speech in daily use: delay in comprehending even a sign draws forth a torrent of abuse, and the most trivial error is visited with curses and blows. To such an extent are carried hatred and contempt of the blacks, and so keen is the jealousy of their assuming a momentary appearance of equality with the whites, that these latter deem themselves disgraced if brought into proximity at the same place of public resort. Should a negro, by any chance, succeed in reaching the boxes of a theatre, he is quickly hustled into the pit, and from thence again into the streets;

and at church, too, let but a colonist perceive praying near him an unfortunate black, the rector is warned that the pews will be all deserted if a wretch like that be permitted to pollute by his presence the place set apart for the whites.

A strong instance of this illiberal feeling occurred in Trinidad during the administration of Sir R. Woodford. His Excellency, at considerable expense to himself, caused a square to be built in the centre of the chief town, a boon of no little value, as until then there was no public promenade in the colony. While the work was in progress, nothing could equal the encomiums lavished upon Sir Ralph: his public spirit and munificence were the discourse of all.

The square being completed, a day was fixed for its being thrown open to the public; but who can describe the surprise and dismay of the colonists, when they learnt that by the word *public*, was intended all classes of the community, whether of white or black complexion. The governor was now regarded as a rash and dangerous innovator; and it was judged requisite to represent to him

that his new regulation, if persisted in, would infallibly lead the negroes into disrespect, and that from disrespect there was but one step to insurrection.

He, however, refused to rescind his order, smiling at the silly prejudices which he hoped to remove by his example. He had not then attained a full knowledge of the planters' character. He daily frequented the square; a band was in attendance; every inducement offered, but in vain: the minds of the colonists were incapable of responding to the sentiments of the philanthropic Woodford; and it was universally agreed upon, that no respectable inhabitant should be seen there as long as the blacks enjoyed the privilege of entry. The governor remaining inexorable, a scheme was formed, from which it was calculated that their expulsion would be brought about, and that they would pass as utterly lawless and ungrateful.

For many nights large portions of the iron railings were torn up; the rare and valuable shrubs, which had been collected with such trouble from so many parts of the globe, were

scattered about the streets, with other devastations that could be devised only by the basest minds. The newspapers were not slack in their descriptions of the height to which the slaves were carrying their daring,—" thanks to His Excellency's mad idea of raising them to a level with the whites." The first words in the morning were of the ravages of the preceding night; the last, on retiring to rest, were of the ravages to be committed by the " governor's friends" before the dawn.

At length, however, the conspirators were detected;—they were found among the chief notables of the island, the task having been undertaken by them with the view of stigmatizing the harmless slaves with the same! Reader, does not this act speak volumes?—at least, it did to Sir Ralph Woodford.

From this, and similar traits, one might be apt to imagine that the colonists had always laid the flattering unction to their souls that slavery was destined to exist for ever; and that, in consequence, it was not incumbent upon them to endeavour to conciliate by kindness a class of beings

who could never be raised to the condition of free men, nor ever be in a position to avenge their injuries. This, however, is not the case, as the planters, extraordinary as it may appear, have long been cursed with the conviction, that a period must eventually arrive, when the British government, even if composed of followers of Tory principles, would find the current of popular opinion setting too strong against slavery to be resisted.

With an infatuation not to be understood, they have pertinaciously clung to the old system, making no preparation whatever for the coming storm, save a preparation which, after a momentary respite, will doom them, unpitied and unprotected, to its violence a thousand-fold increased. The idea of attaching the negroes to them by kindness, and paving the way for their becoming useful and willing free labourers, has always been, and still is, scouted by all; and so far from any attempt having been made to improve their understandings by education and religious instruction, every proposition to that effect, ema-

nating from the philanthropic party, has been viewed with extreme jealousy, and instantly rejected. As far as practicable (for the planters have had to contend with some good men, of whom hereafter,) the negroes have been retained in the most deplorable mental darkness; and to prevent their emancipating themselves from it, impediments have been thrown in the way of their obtaining even an acquaintance with the English language! This is a startling assertion, but the reader may rest satisfied of its truth; for who that reflects, will deny, that the jargon styled "nigger-tongue" must have been expressly formed for them; this idiom alone do they hear from their cradles,—they are invariably addressed in it, and from its being unintelligible to a stranger visiting the estates, while *his* tongue is equally so to the slaves, how can they reap instruction? Numerous specimens of this will be found in the work sent out to the world by the planters, styled "Domestic Manners:" let any one refer to the colloquies stated there to have been carried on by and with slaves,—can they be comprehended?—

Now, as it is equally easy to teach a child correctly as incorrectly, can there exist a doubt that the colonists, in thus degrading their own intellect, (and it must have been a task requiring both trouble and time,) instead of striving to elevate that of the negro, have been actuated by other than the sinister motive I have assigned?

The chances of their being enlightened by books, or by conversations with benevolent strangers, being thus rendered remote, the next endeavour has been directed towards shutting out from the poor negroes all respect for the word of God! Religion is openly scoffed at before them; its teachers loaded with abuse and ridicule; attendance at divine service systematically reprobated and discouraged, to such a degree too, that I have known punishment follow the simple request for permission to be present in a neighbouring Wesleyan place of worship. *

The most solemn ceremonies of our holy creed on all occasions affecting the slaves, are not only neglected, but absolutely scorned. No consecrated ground receives the remains of the mise-

rable bondsman; no funeral rites are performed;* (what planter could bring himself to pronounce over a *black*, "the soul of our dear BROTHER here departed?") no baptism is bestowed on the new-born infant, while no observance of matrimony has authorized the connexion of that infant's parents. In respect to the latter ceremony, it may be said, that laws have been framed to check it, since the tax required is so preposterous, compared with the negroes' means, as to amount to a virtual prohibition; thus coercing them into leading a life of sin! Surely the consequences (I trust I am not irreverent) will be visited by an all-just Deity, not on their heads, but on the heads of their impious owners. These latter, however, on this score, are sufficiently reckless, asserting that a *larger increase* of the stock (and what else care they for?) is obtained by these means, than if the principle of wedlock were inculcated. Even a funeral among the whites them-

* These parts of the work apply now chiefly to estates at a distance from the seat of Government; formerly, however, they would have been of universal application.

selves is rendered subservient to the diabolical wish of instilling contempt of religion into the hearts of the negro population. Until I had the misfortune to be an eye-witness, I could scarcely have conceived any thing so awfully horrid as the blasphemous ribaldry so often displayed on those occasions.

The acquaintance of the deceased assemble at his residence; the coffin, containing the corpse, is in the centre of the drawing-room, surrounded with tables furnished with the usual array of liquor and refreshments. The company having satiated themselves, commence staggering towards the burial-ground, passing jests the whole of the way, and even "booking" bets as to who among the group will next give rise to a similar joyous meeting: not one syllable of regret for the departed; not one of these practical infidels reflects that he, on the morrow, may be summoned to eternity. And while this sinful mockery is being carried on, what is the conduct of the attending slaves? The reply is indeed a lesson. Nature reassumes her sway, and causes the accursed arts

of the masters to recoil upon themselves; the poor ignorant slaves, from the mere impulse of human feeling, moved by the solemnity of the occasion which has brought them together, are loud in their wailing and prayers, in defiance of their masters' sneers, and the taunts of being hypocrites and Methodists.

What a spectacle!—Europeans—gentlemen—brutally carousing over the remains of one who was once their friend!—Savages weeping and praying over what was once their tyrant. Alas, once more, for the misapplication of terms!

The colonists have always calculated, that if they were successful in keeping the slaves in a complete state of ignorance, they would possess in reserve one last powerful argument against, at all events, *immediate* emancipation; since some slight knowledge of religion and some little education must be requisite before the boon of unconditional freedom could be accorded without being a curse to the very class it was intended to benefit, and at the same time pregnant with certain ruin to the colonies. Provided this line of reasoning brought

to their aid some few timid minds from the opposite ranks, or facilitated in any way their wish of grinding down their slaves to the very last moment, and of afterwards obtaining their gratuitous servitude for a period never contemplated by the *original* framers of the "Abolition Bill," they were utterly callous to its branding them, at the same time, in the eyes of all reflecting persons, with the double *sin* of impiety and neglect: for to whom but themselves was to be attributed the benighted state of the negroes? Unhappily for the cause of humanity, the colonists were listened to,—they triumphed in the success of their schemes, — their injured and disappointed victims were doomed still to undergo six long years of slavery!

I must here, for one moment, beg permission to point out to those humane societies which for so many years have been advocating the cause of the slave, that, to their own lamentable oversight must be greatly attributed the successful issue to the above plausible and insidious reasoning on the part of the planters. While meetings were being held in every corner of Great Britain

for the purpose of adopting measures against the continuance of slavery,—while petitions were in preparation, and so much stirring eloquence employed in and out of parliament (and all in vain as far as immediate victory was concerned),—why did it not occur to the chief movers in the holy work to send among the slaves, teachers of the gospel, exacting from government, (and it would have been at once acceded to, if for no other object than that of silencing importunities,) that these teachers, so far from being loaded with opprobrium, should be openly encouraged and protected by the local executive: that repeated official reports should be transmitted touching the degree of countenance afforded them on the various estates, which they should have had the undisputed right of visiting at their discretion, and of the effects produced by their labours upon the negroes.

Had this plan been acted on with vigour and determination, places of worship, however humble, must have sprung up, schools would have followed by degrees, and the force of circumstances alone,

without the necessity of a decree of the Imperial Parliament, or twenty millions being poured into the coffers of slave-owners, would have brought about, long ere this, the complete manumission of the still despairing bondsman. There is, however, ample opportunity of atoning for this oversight; the past, it is true, cannot be recalled, still it may be rendered a mighty lesson for the future: for let HYPOCRITES, or the designing, affirm what they may, slavery, by whatever name it is disguised, as yet exists in all its force, and except the abolition party again bestir itself, and cause some of the above hints to be acted upon, the horrid system will assuredly not be annihilated in our day.

The effects which I have described as following the baneful policy maintained by the colonists towards their slaves, may at first sight appear in some points inconsistent; with the view, therefore, of setting myself right with the reader, I must interrupt the direct course of my observations.

It will naturally be demanded, if such attempts are made to demoralize the negro population, and if

for the accursed end, precept and example are so strenuously employed, how can it possibly come to pass, that, unrestrained (as must be believed) by those feelings which govern civilized man, the slaves should remain tranquil and submissive; that so far from breaking out into insurrection, and taking a fierce, and, one might almost add, just vengeance upon their oppressors, they should bear themselves as if they had "drunk of the pure and living stream."

In the first place, the naturally mild and gentle disposition of these poor people, has, by habit, been rendered so entirely timid and passive, that the dungeon and the lash have operated more powerfully than the prospect of a life of prolonged misery.

This, however, in the course of time, when the question of emancipation came to be *seriously* discussed, and when it could no longer be concealed from the blacks that they possessed numerous high-minded, energetic advocates, would have proved but a feeble barrier against the natural feelings of man, and those feelings might, when once aroused,

have exhibited themselves in a form that would have spread havoc and misery over the whole of our West India possessions, had it not been for the pious labours of a class of men whom the colonists have invariably persecuted with deadly rancour, whose blood they have panted for, in whose blood they may be said to have imbrued their hands,* and whom, through their organs, they have attacked with revolting malice.

Who, then, are these benefactors to our colonies, these ill-requited, outraged benefactors?

THE MISSIONARIES, or, as they are denominated without distinction in the West Indies, THE METHODISTS.

I can picture to myself the cry of scorn which this declaration will call forth from the impious and the cunning, as well as from that large class of well-intentioned, though weak-minded, individuals, who

* Who will deny that the excellent and pious missionary, Rev. J. Smith, was murdered at Demerara? Before the court-martial, by which he was tried, had come to a decision, a gallows was prepared for the prisoner. Such was the ambition for the honour of sitting upon his trial, that the Chief Justice (I believe Wray was his name) obtained a Military Commission to fit him to become a member of the Court.

with their mother's milk have sucked in contempt for the term Methodist. Nevertheless, I again repeat, *the Methodists!* and affirm, that to them the colonists owe a debt of gratitude, which it would be as impossible ever to repay, as it is to atone for the injuries which have been inflicted on them.

Without the Methodists, the schemes of the planters would in EVERY case have been successful; the negroes must have remained in mental darkness; and, what never occurred to the base, though short-sighted, intriguers, revolt and crime would have followed.

And while the Methodists have thus protected the colonists from themselves, to the slaves they have been equally the rock of salvation. I speak not in a spiritual point of view, although I might expatiate on the fact, that without them the negroes would have been to this day ignorant that a God exists, and that they themselves have souls to be cared for; but I allude here to their temporal condition.

When they had become in some little degree

enlightened, and were almost bowed down in despair at the eternal bondage which appeared to await them and their children, and their children's children, the Methodists have consoled them; when excited by the hope of immediate freedom, the Methodists have inculcated moderation; when glowing with disappointment at their emancipation being conditional and remote, the Methodists have preached resignation; and when writhing under the increased severities to which they were at first exposed in their new condition of apprentices, the Methodists have preached obedience.

If thus much has been effected by the Methodists, unprotected and unsupported by the Executive,* slandered and ridiculed by the colonists, what would they not have accomplished if backed by the arm of power?

Can there be a doubt as to the realization of

* Mrs. Carmichael asserts that the Governor of St. Vincent, with whom she passed "MANY HAPPY MOMENTS," apologized for subscribing to the "society" in the following terms: "That it was necessary sometimes to hold a candle to the devil in this world." P. 234.

some, at least, of the results glanced at in preceding pages?

Repeatedly have I enjoyed the gratification of witnessing missionaries addressing flocks composed chiefly of slaves, many of whom had come by stealth to hear the "holy word," and might reckon upon the "lash" in consequence; and I conscientiously believe, that when they "went their way," after the parting blessing, they were better men, and resolved to be more submissive slaves.

On these occasions the tone and delivery of the preachers are admirably appropriate; no rounded periods, no doctrine above the comprehension of the listeners, but all of the simplest nature and the purest, where true religion is concerned; and, at the same time, as I have said before, of a truly beneficial tendency as regards the interests of the planters themselves, since the voice which preaches duty towards God, tells the attentive slaves that this duty cannot be thoroughly discharged, except they yield obedience even to their temporal masters, in those offices where the law gives them a

right to claim it. And yet, these wise and excellent teachers have been held up to the British public as incendiaries and agitators!

At all hours of the day or night are they to be found in the work of righteousness. Towards the dawn you may meet them pale and jaded, just come from the sick-bed of some dying negro, by the side of which they had passed the night in prayer; and if, returning home late, you perceive a light in some solitary hovel, and curiosity, or a more worthy motive, direct your footsteps thither, again the zealous missionary is to be seen administering consolation to the inmates.

The veracious authors of "Domestic Manners in the West Indies," have been pleased to assert, that nothing is farther from the fact than the statements heard sometimes in England, of the labours performed and hardships endured by the missionaries in the West Indies.* I certainly cannot divine by what criteria these people have judged, as my own impartial observations lead me to a widely

* Page 243, vol. ii.

different conclusion. I have known them compelled to undertake painful journeys on foot, however inclement the season, trusting almost to chance for food, sleeping often under trees by night, for it would indeed be vain to seek for support or shelter under a planter's roof, where they might, in a literal sense, ask for "a loaf, and receive a stone." I have seen them exposed to this, fainting with fatigue, illness marked in every lineament of the countenance. Is it possible not to respect men who undergo all this with no earthly object but that of fulfilling a sacred, disinterested task?

Mild and unassuming in their manners, ready to do a service to all men, however irksome or humble the call, diligent in their labours, upright in their dealings, have I invariably found the missionaries of every denomination.* The colonists, through their willing tools, the same authors above-mentioned, have had the unblushing impudence to declare, that the missionaries are so

* And this was likewise the case in Asia, where several of the writer's early years were passed.

very unpolished,* that it is perfectly impossible for them to mix in the good society of the islands. I do not pretend to say where their ideas as to what is polished or unpolished may have been acquired, but I am induced to feel satisfied, in my own mind, that none but a West India slave-owner, or one reared in the poisonous atmosphere of colonial society, would pronounce unpolished the grave, placid demeanor of the missionaries whom I have met; and if they mix not in that valued circle, on which so much eulogy is lavished, the cause must be traced to their being the reverse of tyrants and blasphemers, of extortioners and sensualists. In an insolently arrogant and protecting manner, the planters† promise a cordial reception in the West Indies, to all missionaries who conduct themselves as Christians and gentlemen. Unhappily a sugar estate is not precisely the region in which the proper signification of these terms can be learnt, and consequently the meaning here attached to them is a problem to me, which I

* Page 235. † Page 246.

shall not endeavour to solve: but if to live continently,—if to be models even to the virtuous, restrainers of the vicious, if to more than share their mite with the poor, to do unto all men as they would wish to be done by,—IF these things constitute Christians, such, assuredly, ARE the missionaries.

But if (and here I suspect I approach somewhat nearer the mark of *the planters* and their clique)—if to scandalously and openly violate God's holy commandments,—if to scoff and to lie,—to be eaten up with envy, hatred, and malice,—if to invent and retail slander,—be requisite to form Christians, these people are correct—such are NOT the missionaries. And it is to be hoped that they may continue to be looked upon as ineligible to the "good society of the West Indies," as long as that society remains on its present footing.

Let no mortification, therefore, be experienced by the missionaries at the abuse dealt out to them from so many quarters; let them not mistake "the venom of the shaft for the vigour of the bow;" but smiling at the malice of their enemies, and at the

now praying that "their hearts may be turned," let them be grateful at having escaped the disgrace of their praises.

But for all these trials, what reward does the missionary reap?

He lives reviled, and, friendless and unknown, finds a premature grave in a distant land.

There is, however, another world. He knows it—he feels it—and, blessed in his last moments by the reflection of a useful and well-spent life, he dies happy.

CHAPTER IX.

Disproportion between the Sexes—Causes—Task-work—Flogging—Armed Collars—Sweating Stocks—Cases of Atrocity—Conduct of the Colonial Ladies—Anecdote of one—Depravities on a Plantation—Anecdote—Hints as to what a Commission might detect—A Lottery—The Prizes—Impunity with which Murders of Negroes were committed before the "Abolition Act"—A Document well worthy of perusal.

In the preceding chapter sufficient has been told to convey a tolerably accurate notion of what the negroes are, to this very day, made to suffer. I flatter myself, that the plain, unvarnished outline I have sketched, carries with it such an appearance of fidelity, that little filling up is required to awaken in every bosom, not quite dead to the best feelings of human nature, sympathy for the

oppressed and injured slave: but that I may not lay myself open to the charge of dealing in general accusations and invective, I will now describe, with some little minuteness, a portion of the well-authenticated atrocities which directly or indirectly reached my knowledge.

To the stranger in the West Indies few things can occasion matter of so much surprise as the disproportion, in many of the islands, in the numbers of the sexes—the male exceeding the other in a degree quite wonderful. The least observant traveller could not fail to be struck with the fact; but should he proceed to inquire into, and analyze the causes, his marvel will be not that the proportion of females is so small, but that it is not far less.

I will not stop to inquire how far this state may have been brought about by the attempts to procure abortion, so prevalent on the estates before the "Abolition Act," and which, from their unskilful nature, often terminated in the death of the wretched beings maddened to the commission of the act by the idea of giving birth

to a race of slaves,* and dooming them to the misery which they themselves were compelled to undergo; but there have long existed other causes which have operated quite as effectually to fill the charnel-house with female victims.

Worked as they are, far beyond their strength, during their pregnancy, and to its very last moment; often giving birth to their offspring in the fields, and too soon afterwards made to resume labour at the canes (all which are notorious facts, notwithstanding the hypocritical statements put forth by the slavers on this particular subject), is it wonderful that the disproportion is so great?

Let the reader calmly calculate the following "task-work"† required from all the females, and then say whether it be not sufficient to drag even a strong and healthy woman to the grave, and much more one who is weak and sickly:—

Weeding-canes—5 rows of 170 cane-holes each, 850.

* In ten years, 50,000 of the black population have melted away, instead of increasing according to the laws of nature. In Trinidad, in 1820, the slaves amounted to 24,868; in 1822, to 22,328.

† This is taken from an estate where the negroes are considered to be treated in a peculiarly gentle way since the Emancipation Act.

The strongest man on the estate, commencing at six o'clock, must toil without intermission until two or three in the afternoon to finish the above! The strong women take two hours longer, while the sickly must begin at four in the morning, so as to have the slightest chance of finishing by night-fall: it rarely happens that they are even then able to accomplish it, in which event the deficiency must be made up on Saturdays and Sundays.

Cutting Canes	3 rows.
Digging Cane-holes	100
Fetching and planting Canes . .	200

Boiling-house, from six in the morning till twelve at night; seldom earlier, and often two hours later.

For this last occupation they receive, in money, threepence per day. Wondrous liberality!

I once more ask, whether the smallness of the number of women, compared with the men, is to be marvelled at?

I have often conversed with managers of estates

on this topic, and have heard them frankly admit that they were literally killing the females by overworking them; but that their employers, mostly mortgagee agents, had peremptorily enjoined them to think of the present alone, and that, at whatever sacrifice of life, a specified quantity of sugar must in the season be shipped to Europe.

Added to all this, the females were for many years, equally with the men, subjected to corporal punishment. At the discretion of a brutal overseer they have been liable to have their flesh hacked by cart-whips,—to be marked with scars never to be erased!

To one not thoroughly demoralized by colonial habits, what can be more horrid, or speak more forcibly for the state of "Domestic Manners in the West Indies," than the pertinacity* with

* Even at Barbadoes, where the people are a shade more civilized than in the other islands, Sir Lionel Smith observed enough to induce him to express to the king's government his belief that "the cat is in active use at the station-houses upon male and FEMALE offenders." His Excellency proceeded further to express his dissent from the opinion advanced by the Assembly, that disastrous results would be produced by any relaxation of the system.

which the planters have claimed the right of flogging their female slaves. Imagine a woman brought out before the whole assembled gang, then stripped of her covering, and thrown upon the earth, her legs and arms tightly held by four men. These appalling preparations concluded, executioners, armed with knotted cords, proceed to inflict stripe after stripe, until nature almost sinks under the murderous punishment; during the whole of which, as if by every means to heighten the atrocity, the children of the culprit are made to attend, to witness the torture and the nakedness of her who gave them birth. This ceremonious manner of proceeding is not, however, invariably observed: it often occurs that the overseer cannot curb his fury sufficiently long to admit of the requisite preparations; in this event, the criminal, her body bared, is laid across the shafts of a cart drawn by mules, the "*driver*" following with whip in hand, and continuing to direct the lash, with unerring aim, at the same precise spot, until he has worked deep into the flesh, and well established what he facetiously

calls a "*raw;*" the miserable woman forced all the time to remain in the most favourable posture for the fullest execution of the hellish deed, knowing that if she swerved, or relaxed her convulsive hold, she must be crushed under the cart-wheels, or the hoofs of the mules.

In fact, flogging is practised in almost every form, and for almost every fault.* The colonists prefer the adoption of this system of punishment, offering as a reason, that they are thereby deprived for a less time of their slaves' labour than were imprisonment awarded. This may be their feeling; and I am averse to believe any race of men can derive pleasure from the sufferings of their fellowmen; at the same time, the belief would be far from illiberal on the part of those who, like me, had had ocular proof of the hatred with which the negroes are regarded by the heartless and ungrateful

* A female lunatic, commonly called Cato, was taken up one evening in * * *, and sent to jail for giving vent to her raving by singing and making a noise in the street. She received corporal punishment without respect to her sex or situation; and although deranged, she felt so indignant at being thus degraded, that she tore her dress, and *hung* herself with it in an outhouse!

beings whom they enrich by their labour; nor would this belief be in any shape staggered, if, on visiting some of the jails where females were at work on the tread-mill, they learnt that this punishment, so far from being a substitute for the lash, was given in addition!—for should any of the culprits evince the least sign of weakness or inattention on these occasions, the jailer, or his deputy, (themselves perhaps planters in a small way,) standing by with a whip, and wielding it with a dexterity only to be acquired by a very long apprenticeship, brings its thongs under one arm-pit of the "guilty one," completing the blow under that of the other, after having duly made the circuit of the breasts and neck.

The reader who has been in the habit of seeing persons on the tread-mill will easily understand how fearful must be one single blow received as I have described, when the arms are extended considerably above the head.

I have known of women, who, for being a few minutes late, after the cracking of the whip had summoned them to the field, have had their necks

encircled with collars of tin armed with spikes, such as are sometimes seen in England round the throats of dogs; only in the cases I allude to, the spikes were inverted, and on the slightest turn of the wearers' heads, excoriated and ploughed up the flesh.

I have known of women being placed in a peculiar description of *stocks*,* appropriately termed "sweating-stocks," from the quickness with which they extract all moisture from the body; the person being bent forward in a half-standing position, the feet tied several inches from the ground, and the wrists fastened to staples in the walls; by which contrivance almost the entire weight was thrown on the arms and ancles; in which agonizing state these miserable women were sentenced to remain twelve hours! I am the more particular in describing this last trait of "planter discipline," as Mrs. Carmichael declares, "that so tender-hearted are the owners of slaves in the West Indies, that the very stocks are covered with curtains to protect the said slaves from the

* See Note 1.

attacks of mosquitoes!" It is a pity she did not continue, that every cell is furnished with a Turkey-carpet, and every criminal executed with a silken rope, which would have been equally true with her other assertion, and not much less ridiculous. But enough of this lady's tales; let me continue MY version of her friends' gentle mercies.

I have known of a young female,* who having from the hardships she had undergone contracted an ulcerous habit of body, which rendered her unfit for work, was turned helpless into the streets; and who, after obtaining from a charitable black an asylum for four years, and being in some degree recovered from her disease, although with the loss of the greater part of one of her feet, was seized by her master, who had heard of her improved condition, and sentenced to one month's imprisonment on the tread-mill as a runaway slave. I listened with indescribable emotion to the prayer of this poor thing's mother, imploring the release of the cripple child, and I perused with feelings of indignation, which I am

* See Note 2.

certain will be shared by the reader, a certificate from a planter-doctor, that "the loss of toes was no obstacle to working on the tread-mill!"

I have known of a woman,* who, after having so long and so faithfully served her master, as to be known by the familiar appellation of that master's "Black Diamond," on a trifling dispute suddenly transported to a distant estate; the owner of which had purchased her cheap, on the condition that she should never be permitted to quit until the extreme term of her servitude was completed!

I have heard from the lips of another woman,† and received ample corroboration from those of others of her truth, how, in the ninth month of her pregnancy, she had been abruptly sold to a fresh master, and ordered to quit for ever the estate to which she had become accustomed, and where her husband was still to remain! I myself saw this wretched being, still in the ninth month of her pregnancy, half dead with fatigue and fright, she having in despair escaped from her owner, and walked one day and three nights

* See Note 3. † See Note 4.

through the woods, on her way to the Government House, where she hoped to obtain redress. I have known of mothers having their children torn for ever from their arms,* for no other reason than that the sums tendered for permission to rear their own offspring were considered insufficient by the unnatural and rapacious master. I could unroll a long, long catalogue of similar acts,† but I feel it to be unnecessary.

I have said enough to account for the disproportion of the sexes, and, I might almost add, to account for the horrible practice to which I have alluded.

We will now turn to examine whether the treatment of the male slaves corresponds in any form with that of the female.

It will be but an act of kindness towards the authoress on whose work I have observed, to commence by directing her attention to an incident which occurred on a plantation once her own, and which, under the name of the Laurel Hill, she makes out a perfect negro paradise.

On this estate then, an old man, upwards of

* See Note 5. † See Note 6.

sixty years of age, was sentenced for I really know not what to term it, (certainly not a crime; let the curious peruse his petition)*—to be imprisoned in a dungeon, the walls of which were plastered with fresh undried mortar, and where the only air which could penetrate was through a hole one foot square. There was no place for the poor wretch to rest upon, beyond the boards attached to the stocks. (He mentions nothing of mosquito curtains.)

From all this combined, he suffered so severely as to be unable to move on the second day of his confinement, save on all fours, like a quadruped; independently of which, had it not been for the interposition of the very jailer, he must have almost expired from starvation, even had it been possible for him to have otherwise dragged on existence to the completion of his sentence.

I knew another man, eighty-six years of age,† and who in his own country had been a priest, still forced, after a slavery of *half a century*, to labour in the fields. From time to time his children had

* See Note 7. † See Note 8.

been removed from him, and he was at length left friendless and alone.

He still, however, remembered his former days of freedom. "I was born free," (was his touching expression in my presence,) "and I wish to die free. I ask no remuneration for my servitude of fifty years: the church to which I belong will support me for the few days I have yet to live."

I beseech every one whose eyes may fall on these pages, to read over the petition taken from the lips of the broken-hearted old man, and then find epithets, if there be any in our language sufficiently strong, to do justice to that master who rendered the prayer necessary, or to that governor who, so far from deigning a reply to the appeal, suffered its author to drop into the grave a despairing slave!

I have known of negroes being seized for their master's debts, incarcerated among felons in the public prison, then sold by auction, and transported for ever by their new owners far from their friends and family.

I have often seen in the same advertisement

a proposed sale of slaves and mules;* I have more than once attended, and witnessed the alternate putting up, and knocking down of beasts and men.

I have seen negroes on whose left *feet* were masses of corruption utterly incurable, brought on by the cruel labour which had been required of them as fire-feeders, and out of which putrid and fiery furnaces, caterpillars and grubs were trying to work their way in defiance of the layers of charcoal and tobacco-leaf which enveloped the useless limbs; notwithstanding which condition, these negroes were still forced to toil in hopeless misery to the maximum of their remaining strength.

I have known of disgusting, almost poisonous medicines being administered, and on one occasion by a lady, to slaves whom the merciful owners were pleased to consider feigning sickness, and which medicines gave a shock to the constitutions from which they never recovered.

I have seen a party of negroes on a holiday decked in their gala trim, all mirth and laughter, about to enter on some innocent recreation, when

* See Note 9.

a band of colonial brutes in human forms, dashing on horseback among them, have by blows and kicks dispersed them like chaff before the wind.

I have seen planters enter huts where negroes were amusing themselves in dancing, and, felling the poor people in all directions, have speedily converted a scene of harmless hilarity into one of misery and of wailing. This perhaps (at least so say the colonists themselves) is not done from motives of cruelty, but from an idea that the slaves by over-dancing themselves would be incapacitated from performing the following day's work with vigour.

I have repeatedly seen a negro on the public road quietly smoking a cigar, but, neglecting to remove it from his lips with due rapidity on the approach of a colonist, a blow from a stick or fist has laid it drenched with blood at his feet. This again, according to colonial reasoning, is not meant for oppression, but to teach the black man the respect due to the white. Such is the prevailing system! such a few of its practical results!

Where, it will be asked, are the female relatives of these barbarians? Sleeps then in the colonies

the influence of the gentle sex in refining and humanizing man? Alas! the truth must be told; there the gentle sex loses entirely its benign character, and (such is the accursed effect produced by the constant sight of slavery,) even assists in swelling the torrent of cruelty and oppression.

I have listened with horror and astonishment to the rancorous sentiments issuing from female lips whenever in society the discourse happened to turn upon the negroes. Ladies who in England would have almost *fainted* at the bare idea of treading even upon a spider, will, after a very few months' residence in the colonies, converse in an unconcerned tone on the number of lashes which had been inflicted during the morning on their own or their husbands' slaves. I particularly remember entering rather suddenly a room without being announced, and there I beheld a negress on her knees before her young mistress, beseeching, with agonizing eloquence, that the flogging to which she had been ordered might be remitted. I heard her remind the mistress, that the same breast had given them suck—that their infancy

had been passed together—that they had married at the same time—at the same time become mothers, and that from her milk the children of both had received sustenance. The reply was a cold stern refusal of pardon. I even yet feel the chill which crept through my frame, when the poor woman, perceiving my presence, dashed herself at my feet, and convulsively clasping me, implored my mediation. I was successful; but to rise to the highest honours of my profession, I would not supplicate mortal, as I supplicated on this occasion.

I have seen young and lovely women turn from chaunting the most sentimental songs, to issue directions for the immediate whipping of a slave who had mislaid a piece of music, and then revert to their warbling unmoved by the cries of the victim undergoing the punishment in the yard.

I have likewise seen negro servants appear with their shoulders all scarred and festered from the recent lash, and been lispingly told by the respective mistresses (mild and gentle beings too, strange as it may seem, where the odious "blacks" were

not concerned) that these records of English female humanity had been imprinted on the "worthless" creatures for being absent when they were required to fan away mosquitoes.

I have known of ladies, and those too of rank and reputation in the society of the place, who were in the habit of often with their own hands inflicting corporal punishment on their slaves; and in one instance, in the island of Trinidad, the fair executioner performed the operation with such determined vigour and severity as to render it incumbent on government to bring the circumstance before the judicial authorities.

Can any thing be more atrocious than these proceedings? I grieve to reply that what I am now about to enter upon, will make them appear so many trifles.

The sexual intercourse carried on by the planters with the negresses is the disgusting theme. Would that I could persuade myself to pass it in silence, but I cannot; a stern sense of what is due to truth and morality commands me to speak. I will however be brief, and strive to treat of it in

a way the least likely to shock the feelings, or bring blushes to the cheeks of those female readers, who, not having been cursed with a lengthened sojourn in the noxious land of which I am writing, have hearts that yet feel, and have not yet lost the power of blushing.

No eloquence, however forcible, could describe, as they ought to be described, the profligacy and dissoluteness existing on a plantation in the West Indies.

The entire gang of female slaves are in succession made subservient to the brutal lust of the owner, who turns them off as satiety or caprice dictates; one day they are to be seen seated in silks at his table, and partaking of the same couch, and on the following, working in the fields, and undergoing the lash.

No female, without being prepared to meet consequences really awful to reflect upon, dare reject the proffers of her master—no husband dare refuse him his wife—no mother her child.

The progeny resulting from these connexions are at once born the slaves of their fathers, a

calculation before-hand of the heartless miscreants.

They trade with these children, they sell them to other planters, even knowing them to be more brutal than themselves; they flog them too equally with the other slaves; and even since the "Abolition Act," fathers have been known to bring their own sons before a magistrate, requiring him to adjudge them the cat-o'-nine tails for some trifling boyish error.

In one of these cases, the resemblance between parent and child was so strong, that the magistrate, although not suspecting the shocking fact, laughingly observed it, when the monster at once, without shame, acknowledged the relationship. I am happy to add that the case was dismissed with the scorn and indignation it deserved.*

* The magistrate in question was Lieutenant-Colonel Bush, K.H. the present Commander of the First West-India Regiment. Would that he could be persuaded to give to the public a "Diary of Fifteen Months' Residence in the West Indies, as a stipendiary magistrate." The worthless set with whom he had to deal would be admirably exposed, while the detail of his own conduct would be a model for imitation by any of the present stipendiaries who may wish to act fairly, honourably, and impartially.

The female children are likewise slaves. Occasionally it happens that the fathers, priding themselves on humanity and tenderness, procure establishments for them by delivering them over as mistresses to their friends, literally forcing compliance on the beings to whom they have given birth: but this is a stretch of kindness not very common, as more often the girls are retained in a *bonâ fide* state of slavery, and at a "fitting period" (to employ the colonial slang,) that is to say, when just merging from infancy, become the prey of their own fathers' legitimate European offspring!

What deeds of cruelty and of incest are thus engendered by slavery!

The father damning his own offspring to eternal bondage, the brother debauching his own sister!

All these things are well known to those whose destiny has taken them to the West Indies, and for aught I know, may have been already exposed, in which latter event I shall be sneered at for recounting a thrice-told tale. So be it; any thing is preferable to allowing the public mind to slumber

over the atrocities which have been practised, are practising, and will continue to be practised, unless the planters be FORCED to perform THEIR part of the contract with the same righteous fidelity that has been observed by the scandalously deceived and injured negro.

The following is a fair sample of the spirit actuating the colonists when a female is concerned, as what the hero did, few of his class would blush at imitating.

In the island of ——— resided a planter, very popular among the community, and holding the appointment of magistrate. He took under his protection a remarkably intelligent young negro girl, daughter of one of his slaves. Soon satiated by possession, he availed himself of the first dispute to withdraw his favour; but too heartless and avaricious to make her free, he directed his overseer to place her at work among the field negroes, adding, that as her head was turned by her good luck in having lived with him, it would be requisite to "flog the sulks out of her."

Some time after this occurrence, the love (!) of

her master being again awakened, she was directed to attend at his residence. Ignorant of the purpose, she hastened to obey, but on learning it, she resolutely refused again to yield, observing, perhaps in terms not altogether respectful, on the treatment she had already undergone. This bold demeanour soon converted every tender feeling on the part of her master into hate: he determined forthwith to make an example of the rebellious slave. The poor girl possessed handsome curls, in which all her little vanity was centered, and in which she had perhaps been encouraged in happier days by this very man, who now seizing her by them, vociferated loudly for a razor; the affrighted menials who had run at his call remained motionless; unable to delay his vengeance, he laid hold of a carving knife, and striking the head of the miserable girl upon a table, commenced hacking away; and partly with the knife, partly by tearing up whole handfuls by the roots, he eventually succeeded in depriving her of her hair.

By accident, (I really hope it was an accident, and that he did not really intend to scalp her)

during this operation, the steel entered the flesh, a portion of which fell with the sheared locks to the ground.

On expressing indignation at this occurrence to the parties from whom I heard it, I was quizzed as a "saint," they declaring that if Mr. —— had committed an error in the heat of the moment, he had fully atoned for the "untoward event," since he not only sent his own surgeon to examine the wound, but on the recovery of the slave did not insist she should defray any portion of the expense, nor even pull up in her extra hours the time lost by her illness.

Here I stop in my delineations, not for want of materials, but solely from an apprehension of extending them to too great a length, and of being led into details which might be considered almost too horrid for publication. Were it not for this idea, *I* would exhibit numerous cases of rape* which have been committed by planters on mere infants belonging to their estates.

I could record the names of many† who have

* See Note 10. † See Note 11.

been by the local authorities appointed to high situations in the colonies, with the charge of rape hanging over their heads; and I could describe sundry cases of the same shocking nature, which were arbitrarily dismissed without investigation, even when medical men of the highest respectability had volunteered proof of the injury; but I pause;—these things might not obtain implicit credence, emanating from a private individual. Would, however, that, following the example of France, England were to send a COMMISSION to the West Indies to collect information on the treatment of the slaves, and of the apprentices, and respecting the colonial system generally; facts then might be elicited, which would indeed surprise the world.

What, if it were proved, that even since the Abolition of the Slave Trade by this country, more than one colony belonging to Great Britain has been supplied with slaves, and that, particularly in the Island of Trinidad, the regular slave-trade between it and certain foreign settlements never ceased until the year 1833, independently of

negroes who had been brought from St. Domingo, Guadaloupe, and the Spanish Main?

What, if evidence not to be rebutted were tendered, that until very lately (1833), numerous individuals have been in the habit of clearing vessels at Dominica, running into Martinique, embarking negroes, mostly Creoles, and sometimes Africans, landing them at night at Port of Spain, conveying them to the place of rendezvous, and then parcelling them to the bespeakers, who, bestowing fresh names, were thereby enabled to substitute youthful bondsmen for those defunct naturally or otherwise? *

* The annexed passages, taken from a publication in England, although written on the subject of the Mauritius, apply, in every particular, to the West-Indies:—

"In six months, at the Mauritius, two thousand slaves, illegally obtained, have been liberated."

"The registers appear perfect and unobjectional, but they are compiled from false returns; returns so fraudulent, that their verification has been again and again reported impracticable."

"These frauds have been practised to cloak illegal importations; and so extensive has been the conspiracy to cover these malpractices, and so powerful the faction by which that conspiracy has been organized, that the local government has been overawed—all honest public functionaries intimidated—the course of justice successfully and uniformly impeded—the legal tribunals tainted and corrupted, and the colonial minister alternately deceived into erroneous views of the case, or intimidated into mischievous concessions."

What if the Commission should learn, that in one island alone there exist more than two thousand slaves thus illegally imported, for whom the pirate owners will receive upwards of 100,000*l.* compensation, independently of the gratuitous services for yet six years of their kidnapped victims?

Perhaps the Commission might discover numerous negroes who have fought and bled for Great Britain, and who, after defending with their blood their inhuman owners, are doomed to pine away the remnant of life in that captivity from which the slaves saved their masters.

The slaves, too, who during the late American War* flew from their American masters to the standard of Great Britain, under promise of liberty and protection from the different commanders, and who at the peace were distributed to the amount of many hundreds over the Island of Trinidad, might perhaps appear as supplicants before the Commission, and implore to be released from a state of servitude almost as hopeless and

* See Note 12.

relentless as that from which they flattered themselves they were for ever emancipated the moment they took arms with our forces.

What would be the sentiments of the Commission, if it should find, that to one colony were brought two hundred native Africans, intercepted by British cruisers on their way to the Havannah; and that they were distributed as slaves among the inhabitants by a species of lottery?

Should this be proved, what, people of England, will foreign countries think of us?—in what terms will posterity record the disgraceful, the barbarous, the iniquitous fact, that in the year of our Lord 1835 was witnessed, in the West Indies, the spectacle of a lottery, the prizes of which, distributed by the governor, were the bones, blood, and sinews of human beings?

If the Commission directed its inquiries as to what was the eventual lot of these unhappy Africans, rescued from slavery, and consigned to bondage, while they were mocked with the name of freedom, would it not be shocked if it should find that a few short weeks sufficed to display

to them the horror of their situation; that many of the forlorn creatures threw themselves into the intricacies of the dense forests, there to expire from famine, while others sought refuge in the huts of their naturalized countrymen, to be torn from them, and made to envy the lot of their dead and more fortunate comrades?

Suppose it should be proved before the Commission, that many of these Africans, "rescued from slavery," were so far from finding the freedom meted out to them a blessing, that they preferred liberating themselves therefrom by suicide? That among other instances, some discharged soldiers, attracted by the descent of numerous birds into a copse near the barracks, discovered, hanging to a tree, the lifeless body of one of their countrymen, who had been often heard to exclaim, "Buckra country no good!" almost the only English he had ever learnt?

"In a moment of despair," to employ the words of the eloquent editor of the "Colonial Observer," "the African had determined to tear himself from the vultures of the earth, and yield

his body to the less rapacious vultures of the air, rather than again subject his proud heart to the treatment it had undergone!

If the Commission examined how far the slaves were protected by the different authorities,* who knows, but that in one island, and in one particular district of that island, it would hear that the individual who, *ex officio*, was coroner, had never once, during a period of twelve years, fulfilled that important duty, and that murders of negroes, uninquired into, and unatoned for, were of no uncommon occurrence?

And while murderers, because they boasted of European lineage, were permitted to prowl about in search for fresh victims, who knows but the Commission might rake up from the archives of the court, cases of poor ignorant, unlettered blacks, being inexorably consigned to the gibbet for what the colonial law-makers and law-breakers might in their wisdom term *coining;* that while a white man was more than suspected of being connected with one of the murders hereafter detailed, and

* See Note 13.

no inquiry instituted, a disbanded black soldier was condemned to, and suffered death, for manufacturing a few tin half-bitts?*

Should these things be proved, to whom should "COMPENSATION" be given — the European or the African?

I will not speculate on what other frightful practices a Commission, composed of firm, impartial, disinterested men, might bring to light: even I, perhaps, have not a full conception of the atrocities yet concealed.

I will therefore conclude this chapter with one extract from the proceedings of the French Commission, altogether an official document, not to be rebutted; and if deeds were perpetrated in one island, which the mind of man could have scarcely believed possible without a too awfully ample testimony, why should we not tremble lest similar may have been performed in other colonies, (although our own,) where assuredly the system of government is not perfect?

* Previously to his being launched into eternity his head was besprinkled with the waters of baptism!

" La Commission d'Enquête qui avait pour objet de rechercher la cause des désordres qui s'étaient manifestés en Février dernier à la Martinique a eu lieu de se convaincre que les esclaves n'avaient pas voulu à la colonie autant de mal que leur en font éprouver chaque jour certains habitans. Plus de cent témoins lui ont appris qu'un géreur avait donné deux cents coups de fouet à un esclave de 60 ans: qu'il avait enfermé douze malheureux dans un cachot où cinq auraient à peine été à l'aise, et qu'il avait eu l'horrible précaution d'en faire maçonner toutes les ouvertures pour empêcher les cris d'une négresse enceinte et qui étouffait, de parvenir à ses oreilles.

" Elle a découvert l'endroit secret où un nègre de seize ans avait été enterré après un supplice inoui: attaché sur une échelle, exposé à la chaleur du soleil, il avait reçu 25 coups de fouet toute la journée, et de demie heure en demie heure; mis à terre pendant la nuit, mais toujours crucifié, les crabes lui avaient dévoré les parties sexuelles! Epouvantable mutilation! qui fut pour cet enfant le coup de grâce qu'on lui avait refusé.

" Ces faits sont tellement horribles que l'imagination se refuserait à les croire, s'ils n'étaient consignés ainsi que beaucoup d'autres dans un rapport du Président de la Commission d'Enquête à M. le Directeur des Colonies en date du 3 Octobre 1831."

CHAPTER X.

Curious History of a Black Man—His Remarks on the Colonial System in the Island of Trinidad.

THE following account, of what I may term the extraordinary life and adventures of a black man, named John M'Donald, cannot fail of interesting the reader, while it forcibly illustrates many of my preceding descriptions. Almost the very words of the poor fellow are here given. I have, moreover, repeatedly conversed with, and cross-examined him in the strictest manner, without the power of detecting any discrepancies in his statements.

" I was born," said he, " about the year 1787, in Grenada, of slave parents, who left me an

orphan at an early age. During the brigand war, when the black people were assisted by Victor Hughes and the French Government to obtain, by unjustifiable means, those rights which the British nation has compelled the slavers to grant us, my master, Mr. Clozier, a Frenchman, joined the rebels; and being afterwards taken, was hung by Governor Green, and his property confiscated to the king. OF COURSE, I BECAME FREE. Being friendless, I directed my steps towards St. George's Barracks, where the 3d Foot (or Buffs) was quartered, and having attracted the notice of Colonel M'Donald, its commanding officer, was taken by him into his house as his servant.

I accompanied the colonel to St. Lucia, and got my ancle broken by a musket-shot during the operations attending its capture. When Sir Ralph Abercrombie took the left wing of the Buffs to the capture of Trinidad, I remained with the colonel at Barbadoes, which was garrisoned by the right wing. I afterwards accompanied the expedition to Puerto Rico, then to Jamaica, thence to the Bay of Honduras, to the Bahamas,

and was likewise in Egypt with Sir Ralph Abercrombie.

"I then accompanied Colonel M'Donald to Holland, and travelled with him for a short time into Prussia; and afterwards embarked for Portugal, and served two years, or so, under the Duke of Wellington and Sir John Moore, — always as confidential servant to Colonel M'Donald. Duty took the Colonel to Madras: I again followed him, and returned with him to Europe.

"I now felt anxious to revisit Grenada, and see if any of my family were alive, as I had frequently told Colonel M'Donald: for although it has always been the aim of the slavers to try and convince the British people that we are vile and ungrateful, and more like brutes than any thing else, in order that they may work us as they do like beasts of burden, and rob us of our daily labour; yet a black possesses as correct a feeling of God, and is blessed with a heart as alive to acts of charity, as the unlettered white man of his class; and I challenge any slaver, atheist, or whatever he may be, to disprove the fact.

" Well, Colonel M'Donald acceded to my wishes to proceed to my native land, and procured me a situation as servant to Captain Ross, R.N., of the Hawk sloop-of-war, with the agreement that Captain Ross should bring me home, or send me back, when I had accomplished the object which I had in view. The Hawk anchored off Barbadoes; and taking on board a detachment of the Royal Artillery, commanded by Major Prevost (who died in this island), landed half of them at Grenada. A Lieutenant Adams, of the Artillery, whom I had attended during the passage, finding me such a capital servant, requested Captain Ross to allow me to remain with him: Captain Ross agreed for a few days, till he had suited himself with one, and I went ashore.

" The next day the mail-boat came in, and reported a French frigate on the windward coast of the island; and the Hawk put to sea, since which I have heard nothing of her; I believe she was lost in a white squall. Shortly afterwards Lieutenant Adams was ordered to return to Barbadoes, and left me with Captain Gilbert, of the

Royal Artillery. He would have taken me with him, 'but, as he said, Captain Ross had only lent me for a few days, perhaps he would return during my absence, and be displeased.' Captain Gilbert went to England about two years afterwards, leaving me unemployed in Grenada.

" After remaining in an unmolested state for three months, I was apprehended as a RUNAWAY, (such is the law among these free Britons,) and lodged in the cage for three months, 'till my OWNER should be found,' which of course not happening, I was SOLD for my JAIL EXPENSES: such is the humane colonist, the hospitable, the generous slaver! Oh, how little do the British people know these men! but they are beginning to be acquainted with them now that their day is set: every dog has his day. Well, one Francis Robinson, who traded in a vessel to and from Grenada to Trinidad, bought me: he was afterwards Chief of Police in this island, and died here. On his death I was sold by Judge Bigge, according to Spanish law, to John Dawson Parke, who being second in a fatal duel, his property was

confiscated. OF COURSE, I BECAME FREE. His brother, Benjamin Parke, took me into his house, but always told me I was as free as he was. He died two years afterwards, and I then was free by having no master; and remained so for three years. One Mr. Percy, who is now here, then sent a policeman for me, and put me into jail; and I was sold by Mr. Jones, the Escribano, for a debt due to Captain Percy (about 250 dollars) by Mr. Dawson Parke, contracted in America. A Guinea negress, called Zabet, bought me. And here am I, free by right so many times, who have often conversed with, and waited on, the lamented Mr. Wilberforce, at Greenwich: the servant to Colonel M'Donald: I, the English soldier, and wounded in the service of England: here am I, the slave of a French African!

"Soon after this I went to the Protector of Slave's Office to state all these circumstances, and to claim my liberty, but I was told I had *no proofs:* although Rose, a slave whom Mrs. Gloster (the Protector's wife) had taken with her to England under promise of freedom, and which she refused

to give her on her return to the West Indies, and what is worse, sold her; yet this same Rose obtained immediately her liberty when she applied the day after me. I must say, Mr. Hammet, the assistant Protector, was inclined to serve me, and told me he believed my statement, and the certificate signed by Mr. Ryan, (formerly of the Buffs, and whom I met as band-master of one of the battalions of the 60th Regiment in Grenada,) stating my having accompanied my master in Europe and Asia; yet he was overruled by Mr. Gloster, and as we cannot read or write it is useless to complain. Some, such as Edward of the Terre Promise, Ben of Malgrè Tout, and various others, are similarly situated with me, and if any of us come up to complain of cruelty from our owners, we are sent back with a pass, which we think is an order for our oppressor to give an account of his conduct, but as soon as we arrive we are put into the iron stocks, and then flogged on the following day by order of the commandant. If we again complain, we are told that the com-

mandant did perfectly right, as we had no business to come away without a pass; when it is notorious the slavers always refuse us passes, nevertheless they can always say we never asked for one, and can always find persons to swear, through fear of punishment, just as they wish. In short, the slavers now do with us just as they like; they tear up the Protector's letters and passes, curse them, and flog us worse than ever, being well assured that they will never be called to account for it, as they know the Governor has no leaning towards liberal opinions; indeed they make a boast of it, and tell their slaves so when they go to complain, and we soon discover that our masters have not mistaken their man, nor reckoned without their host. Indeed, excepting Mr. Hammet, the rest of the Protectors are afraid of the planters, whose agents drag us out of the Attorney-General's Office, beat us, and yet nothing is said. When we come up to town, should the Protectors be absent, we are apprehended as runaways, put into the tread-mill, sent down to the estates, and then

flogged, to deter us from coming up to make complaints. Frequently too, when we imagine that our unjust punishment has been examined into, and justice will be dealt out to our oppressors, the agent takes us into his store, and flogs us with the cat, for daring to complain. On most of the estates we are punished when there is no witness brought forward by us; but how is it possible for us to prove any thing but by circumstantial evidence, and how in our forlorn situation can we disprove the statements of a master? The consequence is, that the masters gratify their rage with impunity, and there are many of us who have carried bruises and cuts upon our bodies, which have been refused as evidence; and thus, afraid to return, from a conviction that our complaints will be revenged by the masters, we run into the woods, like the Indians of St. Domingo. Thus we drag on our wretched existence; and were it not for Judge Scotland, whom God bless, and some few humane gentlemen, who openly condemn these barbarities, Heaven knows what further

would become of us; for since our oppressors know that we are to be half-free in August next, their rage, which always falls on our bodies, knows no bounds. Oh, if I could describe all the miseries I have seen and endured in Trinidad!—but it would take up too much time. Do, therefore, exert yourself, and let me depart from this accursed restraint, by which I am robbed of my labour as if I were a felon in jail! Do help a poor creature, suffering the ignominious and cruel yoke of slavery; and God will reward you in the other world, and I will pray for you in this!"

Such is the plain, unvarnished tale of John M'Donald, a black; the observations and reasonings are altogether his own. I might have rendered them more interesting by placing the incidents in a connected form, and by translating them into the negro idiom, but I did not wish to have recourse to what might seem an artifice to gain attention. I shall simply observe, in conclusion, that I believe the above facts were

eventually embodied into a petition to the Colonial Secretary by the humane and enlightened gentleman from whom I originally heard them, and that he succeeded in rescuing the unfortunate supplicant from bondage.

CHAPTER XI.

Lawlessness of the Colonists—Curious Instance—Danger attending Liberalism—Examples—Mr. Buxton—Admiral Fleeming—The Militia—The Press—Judge Scotland—A worthy Tory—The entire Colonial System exposed in the Case of Mr. Young Anderson—Hint to the Whigs—Anecdote.

LONG before this, the reader will have perceived but too clearly, that not only are atrocities exercised with impunity* on those whose misfortune it is to have been born with a black skin, but that the miscreants so exercising them

* "I am forced to declare that acts of cruelty are committed in our colonies without any punishment, or even censure falling on the offender. There is extreme difficulty in bringing to justice the perpetrators of cruel deeds in the West Indies. The laws are in most cases defective in affording protection to the bondsman."—*Archdeacon Elliot, of Barbadoes.*

are held almost perfectly harmless in the world's opinion; for should it so happen that the circumstances of a case are so extraordinarily flagitious as to compel a judicial investigation, and that a verdict of "guilty" ensues, which will be followed in all likelihood only by a nominal penalty, the individual attacked is at once regarded as a martyr in a holy cause, a victim to cant and methodism; addresses are got up, friends rally around, and every testimony is afforded of his increased worth in the estimation of his brother colonists.

There is not perhaps a more certain method of attaining distinction than by signalizing oneself in a crusade against the advocates for the abolition of slavery. However infamous and iniquitous (according to the sense in which these expressions are understood in European society) may be the means employed, they are regarded in a widely opposite light in the colonies. Ruffianly assaults, and even murder, will be hailed as effects of the purest patriotism, while robbery and burglary will be emblazoned as deeds worthy of a hero. A

remarkable example of this was brought to my knowledge very shortly after my arrival in the West Indies: the case, according to what will perhaps be considered my narrow-minded ideas, is one of the most lawless and disgraceful ever witnessed in a community laying the remotest claim to civilization; I doubt, indeed, whether a country inhabited altogether by savages, or overrun by banditti, could record any thing more suitable to the character of the one and the other.

In alluding to some of the facts which a Commission might bring to light, I hinted at the POSSIBILITY of its discovering that a vast number of negroes still retained in slavery, had been illegally imported. Upon this suspicion being originally whispered, several humane individuals instituted an inquiry as to its grounds, the result of which was, that many informations on the subject of breaches of the Consolidated Slave Act, together with important documents requisite to substantiate them, were lodged at the Vice-Admiralty Court. Great was the consternation among the slave-party. To the certainty of losing the apprenticeship of these

negroes, with all claim to compensation, was added the reasonable apprehension that charges even of piracy might eventually be followed up. Conscious of guilt, they dared not abide a judicial investigation; and knowing it to be impossible to cajole or intimidate the upright judge, before whom the cases were to be brought, an appeal to open force was decided upon.

The preliminaries being arranged, and leaders chosen, a band of these conspirators, regularly armed, assembled in the dead of night before the Admiralty Court, and having disposed their force so as to prevent any obstruction which might be offered, literally proceeded in due form to besiege the Court House, and having effected an entry, carried off in triumph the whole of the proceedings pending before the tribunal on the subject of the piratical importations in question.*

At the period this outrage was committed, the situation of Attorney-General was singularly enough held by an independent, determined man, and he having received information as to the per-

* See Note 14.

petrators, issued warrants to search the premises occupied by the partners of a mercantile establishment, of which a Member of Council was the head.

These people having received notice of the intended search, collected their friends, and effectually thwarted the police who were charged with the execution of the warrant. They permitted every room to be searched but *one*, and in that the papers were hid under one of the boards of the floor, which had been ripped up, and then nailed down to conceal them. Sir Lewis Grant, who was Governor, hearing of the inefficiency and timidity of the police, sent a requisition for a military party from the 19th regiment, to be in readiness to aid the magistrates; and such was the violence of the lawless rabble, that a disposition actually existed to oppose force by force, and deputies offered the services of volunteers from two of the militia corps. The idea, however, of enacting "three days" in the streets of the Port of Spain was not persisted in, when some half dozen red coats made their appearance; the threatening cloud was dissipated in smoke, and the suspected

burglars were compelled to enter into recognizances to appear when called upon. And these people, who to robbery were prepared to add murder, who in some countries would have died upon the gibbet, in others have been consigned for life to the galleys, and in all, save the one of which I am treating, stamped with the blackest infamy, here became rising characters, amidst the greetings and applause of the respectable part of the community, as the planters and their supporters are designated.

With the same violence with which the colonists aid and protect each other on all questions arising out of their slavery politics, do they traduce and persecute those whom they believe adverse to their views. No man taking part in favour of the negro, can escape odium and ridicule in their bitterest forms. Sharpe, Wilberforce, Buxton, Lushington, Stephens, and, last not least, Admiral Fleeming,—what volumes of abuse have been, and still continue to be, lavished upon them! they have been the means of enriching a hundred editors, who have had the tact to dedicate their columns to the task of vilifying them. I may take this

opportunity of remarking, however, that the enmity would appear more deadly towards Mr. Buxton and Admiral Fleeming, than even that entertained for the others; and I will undertake to say, that were these two, whose names will be coeval with the duration of the western hemisphere, and will be handed down to posterity as *those* of men who remained faithful when so many proved false, who surpassed the zealous, even among the zealous, in the work of rescuing the negro from bondage; were these two, to arrive in any island in the West Indies, and venture to move out unsurrounded by a guard of those grateful beings, who night and day implore blessings upon them, they would inevitably be torn to pieces by the Europeans, who would all vie as to who could most mangle their bodies. I can solemnly affirm that I have repeatedly heard respectable colonial gentlemen run on in that strain; indeed, they do so on all occasions where the two persons mentioned are the subjects of discourse, usually concluding with declarations of the willingness with which they would lay down their lives, could they but first wreak their vengeance

on Fowel Buxton and Admiral Fleeming. The fiendish malice with which philanthropists are looked upon in the colonies, is portrayed in numerous pages of Mrs. Carmichael's work; she (unwittingly, perhaps,) seizes every opportunity of exhibiting the vile principles of her employers, and on this topic alone can her "Domestic Manners in the West Indies" lay claim to fidelity.

They, however, who reside in the mother country, can well afford to view with contempt the slanders and attacks of their enemies in the colonies; but sad is the lot of those friends to humanity whose pursuits compel them to remain where humanity is not. He who is imprudent enough to express sentiments inimical to the slavery system, becomes at once exposed to the fury of a party which is all powerful on the spot. It is morally impossible he can avoid destruction. If a tradesman, no one deals with him; his credit is cried down, he is quickly a bankrupt. If he holds an appointment under government, a cabal is formed, charges trumped up, sooner or later he is

dismissed. If a lawyer, never will he receive a brief from a white person, and wonderful will it prove if he be not eventually driven from the courts. If a clergyman, he will find himself arraigned before the sessions for disseminating traitorous doctrines, and assuredly will he hear the word "Guilty" pronounced.

Woe betide the governor of a jail, or a policeman, who is suspected of acting with weakness (Anglicè mercy) towards slaves committed to his custody for insubordination, but which insubordination he well knows existed only in the imaginations of the masters: ruin will be the result.

Let but a protector of slaves act as his title

* The House of Assembly, at Barbadoes, at their sitting of October 16, 1833, called Mr. Le Fevre, the Collector of Customs, before them, in consequence of the reports abroad of his having given certificates of freedom to certain slaves, who had formerly been in England. He replied, that on such persons coming to him, he merely gave them a bit of paper, stating, that by the 3d clause of the Act of Parliament for the emancipation of slaves, "All slaves who have been in England or Ireland previous to the passing of the Act, shall be free."

Mr. Le Fevre declared at the same time to the House, that he had no disposition to interfere between the owners and their slaves, and that in future, if any slaves should come to him on the subject, he would desire them to go about their business!

would imply he ought, and how long will he remain a protector?

The lamentable case of Mr. Hammett* will be reply sufficient. The colonists, finding him inflexible in the discharge of his duty, that he sifted every case of oppression to the bottom, and would allow no compromise to be entered into, decided that he should be driven from his office.

Without relaxation, he was summoned to the most distant spots; in sickness or in health he was forced to obey the orders which were incessantly issuing, at the same time that a combination was formed not to supply him with food, shelter, or conveyance. He was left altogether to his own personal resources. The consequence was, that

* This gentleman was even reprimanded by Sir G. Hill, for his activity in favour of the slaves.

"I am given to understand," were Sir George's words, "that you are too precipitate in your examinations of those slaves who claim their liberty by infractions of the statute. I hold in my hand a petition, that a witness in the case therein mentioned had not been examined, and her *evidence* went to REBUT . . . . . all the evidence in favour of . . . . . the slave."

This unexpected slavery address somewhat startled the nephew of the good Sir Ralph Woodford; he, however, proved to the Lieutenant-Governor, that the woman's evidence had not only been taken, but her deposition confirmed the others.

often compelled to go by water to some particular district, and sometimes forced to remain in an open boat for forty-eight hours, he had generally no alternative on landing but to seek repose under a tree, the orders of the masters having been so peremptory, that even the negroes did not dare to invite him to their huts.

After resting himself, he perhaps had to proceed many miles further, which he was forced to do on foot, the same causes operating to deprive him of all means of transport.

The sequel is easily told. He encountered these things long and often, borne up by his energetic spirit; but it was impossible for human nature not eventually to succumb: the schemes of his enemies were at length attended with success: poor Hammett was removed from his office—removed by the hand of death.

So fully is carried on, in every department, the resolve to crush all who may differ from the great body of the planters, that even the officers of militia, who pride themselves on efficiency and subordination, ridicule the idea of regular

troops being required in the colonies, and who might therefore be expected, as becomes good soldiers, to banish all political feelings and animosities when acting together professionally, will allow no one to remain in their chivalrous ranks who is not a staunch "slaver:" more than this, whole bodies of these admirably disciplined officers have been known to refuse attendance at parades except certain of their members, suspected of being tainted with Methodism, were removed from the service. More than one instance might be produced in illustration of this feeling among the colonial military; but, for the present, that of Lieutenant-Colonel Prietto, of the island of Trinidad, will be sufficient. This gentleman commanded, for a length of time, the St. Joseph's Light Infantry Battalion, and enjoyed the esteem of the late Sir Ralph Woodford for the superior state of discipline in which he preserved his corps. He was, however, indiscreet enough, in private society, to declare himself averse to the state of slavery in which the negroes are retained in Trinidad, and favourable to their admission to the enjoyment of

their natural rights. Will it be credited, that these principles were not only pronounced subversive of colonial prosperity, but were deemed so fit subject of a Military Court of Inquiry, that the Lieutenant-Governor literally ordered one to examine into the conduct of Colonel Prietto,—appointing a planter and slave-owner President! Thus, principles which would reflect honour on a person in Europe, subject him in the West Indies to be tried and degraded.

Exposure of these shameful things is, in a great degree, prevented by the manner in which the press is shackled in the colonies: an individual must possess no common share of nerve and daring to attempt to set up a newspaper on liberal principles. Not very long since, the life of the editor of the "Jamaica Courant" was sought after with demoniac rage; the monstrous crime of which he had been guilty consisted in advocating emancipation; it was the same with Loving of Antigua, with Anderson of Trinidad, and many others of different islands. No journal advocating the cause of humanity can continue long: all advertisements

are withheld from it—the merchants, or store-keepers, will not, at any price, supply paper—they will combine together on hearing that a vessel has arrived with some, and purchase up the whole; by which the editor is repeatedly forced either to put off his publication altogether, or to send it forth on the coarsest description of material.

He is likewise attacked and injured in numerous other ways; and if he meet assertions by a simple statement of facts, or bring forth argument in reply to the invective with which he is assailed, he is either condemned as a libeller, or exposed to brutal assaults, for which no court will grant redress. On the other hand, the newspapers supporting the politics of the opposite party are countenanced in every form; their subscribers are composed of all the "respectability" of the colony,—every attorney's scrub wields a pen in their columns,—while the attorney himself gives an unfee'd opinion as to "how far it be prudent to go:" gifts, places, and dinners, crowd upon the editors, who, in return, according to their instruc-

tions, defend all that is base and iniquitous, and calumniate all who are known for liberality or worth.

In the case of the attack made upon the Admiralty Court, I have mentioned that the perpetrators well knew that the judge was not to be intimidated: he was in consequence marked as a future victim. Under any circumstances the colonists would have been averse to a man like Judge Scotland. His uprightness, his purity of mind, his very talents, were so many crimes in their eyes; but when they found that he was resolved to deal impartially between man and man, without regard to the colour of his skin, their rage passed all bounds. Their organ, the "Port of Spain Gazette," was directed to spit its venom on him.

Well did that journal, the vilest that ever disgraced the press of any country—vile for its principles—vile for its ignorance—and doubly vile for the worthlessness of its conductors and supporters,—well did it perform the task. In less than five months it published against him the extraordinary

number of thirty libels, all of the most scandalous nature. The Judge long regarded them with contempt; but at length, when further forbearance, considering his high and important office, would have been culpable, he resolutely entered an action in the tribunals of the colony; and a painful sight it was, to behold this good and just man compelled to resign his seat, and descend from the bench, to crave that justice as a common suitor, which he himself had been deputed by his sovereign to administer to others, in a degraded colony.

No mercy could be showed to him who thus dared to withstand the public clamour, and appeal to the law for redress; his very life was threatened, and in danger; and nothing would have saved him from the attacks of his enemies, but the knowledge that the free, coloured and black, population, were ready to fly to his rescue. Whilst he sat serene and unmoved, one party was armed for his assassination, and another, and fortunately the more numerous, was equally prepared to shed the heart's blood of the conspirators on the first

moment!—and this, under the British government in the year 1833!

The result, however, is perhaps even more extraordinary.* When the case in question was called for trial, it was discovered that the records, together with an iron chest which contained them, had been abstracted from the court-house the night before.†

Had I not seen the official documents connected therewith, (copies of which are annexed,) I should

* See Note 15.

† The trial, notwithstanding, did take place at a future day. The following evidence was given by one of the witnesses:—

"E. L. Joseph states:—The Articles in question created very considerable sensation. I recollect a surmise about town some time since, to the effect, that Mr. Jackson was the writer, but the editor had informed him, that he (the editor) was the author, although they had been submitted to Mr. Jackson for his professional opinion; for which a fee of one doubloon was paid."

Mr. Jackson was the *Solicitor-General* of the Colony. The outraged and maligned plaintiff was the Chief Judge!

In justice, I must say, Mr. Jackson denied this, although he added, "that the Port of Spain Gazette was a valuable paper, particularly at this crisis of affairs."

A Solicitor-General terming "valuable" a paper in direct and insulting opposition to that government under which he holds office! and this, too, in a public court!

Such are the gratitude and support the Whigs invariably receive for their merciful, but ill-timed forbearance towards Tory underlings.

have hesitated to relate such acts of lawlessness, feeling that they are almost beyond the belief of those, who, not having had personal experience among the slavery advocates, are unable to form the remotest conception of the lengths to which they will proceed in all relating to their favourite system. At the risk of appearing prolix, I must continue my illustrations of the persecutions meted out by them to their political opponents. To one instance, in particular, I am especially anxious to direct the attention of the reader, as independently of its exhibiting, in some very minute points, the organization existing among the colonists, the injured man to whom it relates has made severe personal sacrifices in the cause of negro emancipation, and is well entitled to the sympathy and support of all who have fought on the same side. I allude to Mr. Young Anderson, of the Island of Trinidad, who, although a West Indian, has distinguished himself as a philanthropist in the widest sense of the term. His family having been long settled in that colony, and maintained a high and honourable reputation, he determined

to fix himself there, and follow the profession of the law, for which a superior education, perfected in England and France, had rendered him admirably qualified.

Unfortunately for his worldly prospects, he found himself unable to cloak his feelings, when he began to perceive the abominations hourly practised towards the slave in the island to which his adverse star had led him, and where, in a greater degree, perhaps, than even in the other colonies, a system had long been encouraged and upheld, demoralizing alike to the oppressor and his victim. He raised his voice in the very den of slavery. The planters started with dismay; the poor bondsman, bending under the weight of his chains, looked up with hope to his courageous advocate. Finding that something more was requisite than his simple voice and example, Mr. Anderson, at great expense to himself, established the best conducted journal which for many years had appeared in the West Indies; and while he mildly but firmly exposed the wrongs of the negroes, he, at the same time, in treatises

breathing the spirit of the purest benevolence, pointed out to the planters the line of proceeding, which, in the actual state of public feeling, it behoved them to adopt, whether as good men, or as *wise* men. As uselessly might he have spoken to the winds! Every form of abuse was lavished upon him, but he swerved not. Orators were brought into the lists against him—they quailed before the eloquence of truth. Disgusting pamphlets were circulated, the writers of which, whether the bloated dandy of Port of Spain, or the itinerant mountebank from Glasgow, alike grovelled in the mire under his literary lash.

They now had recourse to menaces of personal violence, and as Lynch-law is almost the only law recognised by these people, he was publicly told to prepare for its application to himself, unless he would forthwith desist from his advocacy of the blacks. "I am well aware," was his reply, "that I am not safe in this island from the midnight assassin, nor may I prevail against a ruffianly attack, or the force of numbers; but should I perish a victim to my political opinions, under the

bludgeons of the 'friends' to the 'liberty of the press,' my fate will be commiserated by the wise and good of the island, and my fall will be avenged."

They had good grounds for believing that the latter prognostic would be amply verified, and finding him fearless, his enemies varied their tactics.

A cocoa and spice plantation were offered to him by a certain Honourable Member of Council on easy conditions, tantamount to a free gift, provided he would relinquish his pen. A situation *out of the island* was tendered by official authority.

He spurned the bribes, and pursued his righteous path, until by the passing of the Emancipation Act he witnessed the success of the cause for which he had so nobly, so disinterestedly striven, and which at his hands had received no inconsiderable aid.

In the mean time, however, his opponents, no longer hoping to corrupt his integrity, sought to throw discredit upon his proceedings by excluding him from the society of the place; and the officers

of the militia corps, in which he held the rank of senior Captain, entered into a conspiracy to remove him. A letter was written to the Commanding Officer, and transmitted to Major-General Sir Lewis Grant, the Governor, in which Mr. Anderson's editorial advice to the coloured inhabitants not to join in the proposed resistance to the King's authority, was designated as an attempt to renew and perpetuate those differences between the various classes of the FREE population, which every good subject should be anxious to allay, and to bury in oblivion; whilst his recommendation to the planters to ameliorate the condition of their slaves was characterised as a total disregard for the interests of the community in advocating principles subversive of the existing state of society in the West Indies.

This extraordinary MILITARY denunciation concluded with an open avowal on the part of the conspirators, not to appear on parade if Mr. Anderson were permitted to remain in the regiment.

The Governor, after observing that the mode of treating such mutinous conduct was obvious, and

that nothing but his immediate departure from the colony prevented him from carrying his notion into effect, thus recorded in a militia general order his opinion of Mr. Anderson:—

"In justice to Captain Anderson, and in opposition to the representations of people leagued against him, His Excellency must express his fullest satisfaction with Captain Anderson's conduct and character as an officer and a gentleman, and as a person anxious for the welfare of the colony, and the good of all the inhabitants. He has, therefore, the Governor's thanks, and a claim to approbation; and His Excellency is pleased to confer on him, in addition to his regimental rank, the rank of Major by brevet in the militia forces."

Nothing surely could be more honourable and conclusive. Yet will it be believed, that the vessel which was to bear Sir Lewis Grant to England, had scarcely moved from the harbour, when his successor, a civilian, terrified by the frantic violence of the colonists, with indecent haste neutralized the above order, and left Mr.

Anderson exposed to the malignity and persecution of the faction, which though scotched in some degree by General Grant, again ventured to rear its crest on the arrival of Sir George Hill, who at once entered heart and soul into the views of the now dominant party, and exhibited the principles by which he intended to be swayed, in the repeated declaration that no individual who associated with Mr. Anderson, (the man, mark, whom his predecessor had stated to be "anxious for the welfare of the colony, and the good of all the inhabitants,") should ever thrive while he remained Governor of Trinidad. Up to this declaration has he inflexibly acted.

Mr. Anderson, however, bear up against the persecutions to which he is still subjected; let him not abandon himself to despair; a brighter era will yet dawn upon him and the colony which he has so faithfully served.

The Whigs must have already begun to learn, that the appointment to, or retaining in office their political foes, those whose study and exertions are for their utter annihilation as a party,

is not the method to secure the success of their humane and enlightened views. It is to be hoped they may soon find themselves sufficiently powerful to be enabled to "cast out" from every office in the state, those whose sole claims to distinction consist in their close connexion with Tory leaders. When this day of glory shall arrive, giving joy to millions, and spreading its effects far and wide, one ray will assuredly reach the distant isles of which I am writing. None but upright rulers will THEN be sent thither; and all those similarly situated with him, whose case I have brought before the public, will find their wrongs redressed, and what will be more prized by their generous minds, their talents called into requisition for the public weal.

One more instance of the danger of exhibiting humane feelings, and we will turn to the consideration of other matters.

An officer of the 25th Regiment was riding one day at Barbadoes, when on a sudden his attention was roused by piercing shrieks issuing from a neighbouring grove. He galloped to the spot,

and there beheld tied to a tree, a young female slave, on whose naked body a ruffian was inflicting lashes with a cart whip. Too much shocked to reflect on what might be the consequences of his interposition in so delicate an affair, he sprang from his horse, and placing himself between the tortured girl and her torturer, dared him to proceed with his employment.

The man escaped with rapidity, and preferred a complaint of the manner in which he had been impeded in the lawful discharge of his duty. The commotion produced is indescribable. The planters talked of the affair as a daring and unconstitutional interference of the military with the civil power; and at first determined to frame a motion thereon in the House of Assembly, and to transmit a full statement to His Majesty's Government.

The excitement having a little subsided, certain "potent, grave, and reverend seignors," assembled in conclave to deliberate calmly as to the steps to be adopted at this awful crisis. By some it was

gently hinted that the officer should be "called out" by the planters in succession, until a well-aimed shot should lay him low.

This was highly approved of, but as the first step is always the most difficult, so none was found in this instance to set the example of taking it.

Another plan was then proposed, namely, that a deputation should wait on the general commanding the forces, *requiring* his excellency to arraign the culprit before a court martial, for conduct unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman, in having prevented the due hacking of the flesh of a female slave, as ordered by her owner, a Barbadoes planter.

This likewise fell to the ground, one of the meeting expressing a doubt, from his knowledge of the perverseness of the military "in these days," whether they might not stamp the proceeding with epithets the very reverse of those employed by themselves—the planters. At length they came to an arrangement, and certes an efficient one, that the officer should be summoned before a bench of

magistrates of their own body, where having received a fair proportion of planterian magisterial vituperation, he was mulcted in a penalty of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS.

CHAPTER XII.

Plans to obtain White Slaves—Carried into Effect—Portuguese Victims—Fayal and Madeira—The frightful Condition of the cajoled—Havoc among them—A Voice from the Dead—Appeal to Portugal—Solemn Warning to Emigrants.

THE reader in all likelihood will now begin to breathe more freely, hoping that the catalogue of colonial iniquities must at length be exhausted, and that he may proceed without having to wend his painful way through paths strewed at every step with horrors.

Unfeigned would be my joy if such were the case; but, alas! the hope is not to be realized; deeds yet remain to be exhibited which, if not of a more aggravated nature than many already recorded, are still, from peculiar circumstances, more disgraceful to us as a civilized people, more damning as a Christian one.

The public mind having for so many years been familiarized with the existence of slavery in the colonies, I can well understand how a large number of my countrymen have brought themselves steadfastly to believe that it is perfectly conformable to the laws of nature that the Black should be the bondsman of the White.

I can equally comprehend how many good and talented men, and virtuous patriots, while detesting in the abstract the system of slavery, yet regard its continuance as requisite for the success of our commerce, and tending highly in many other respects to our national prosperity.

With those who hold these sentiments, I am not on the present occasion disposed to enter into a discussion; but I presume I do not err in the supposition, that such sentiments are based on the principle that in all cases the slaves must be black; for I cannot but believe that the idea of kidnapping and selling Europeans into bondage would be repelled in England by all classes without distinction, however opposite the political bias of each; and that the wretch with whom it should

originate, would for ever be stamped with the curse and loathing of an indignant nation.

With what sensation then will the public receive the announcement, that no sooner was the Abolition Act finally passed, and that in despite of every intrigue many of its clauses could no longer be prevented coming into force, than the planters determined to supply by the labour of *white men* the loss of those services which they began to apprehend they might no longer have the power of compelling the negroes to render?

Yes, people of England, no sooner had you, through your representatives in a Reformed Parliament, spoken out in a voice not to be resisted, and the edict in consequence had gone forth, that negro slavery should cease to exist in your colonies, than plans and speculations were entered into to supply the plantations with *white slaves!* I acknowledge this to be a frightful, an appalling accusation. I pledge myself, however, to prove its truth to the minutest point; to bring home to the conviction of the most sceptical—that Europeans are now languishing in one island of the

West Indies, in a state of slavery as absolute as that from which the negroes have been emancipated.

The scheme once determined upon, the traffickers in human blood cast eager glances around in search of the spots likely to afford them the richest harvest! They fixed on Madeira and Fayal. The peasantry of these islands offered peculiar attractions; they were simple and confiding—the more likely to listen to promises and seducing representations; they were ignorant of the English language and customs—it would consequently be difficult for them to make known the cruel deceptions which were to be practised; they were foreigners—and the chance of sympathy in their behalf was rendered more remote. Vessels were fitted up for the reception of the destined slaves, and despatched with speed and secrecy to the above islands. Emissaries had previously circulated glowing descriptions of the certainty with which fortunes might be acquired in the West Indies by all who would simply bind themselves to serve there as apprentices for seven years. With what rapture did the poor victims rush to "kiss the

hands just raised to shed their blood;" they flocked in numbers; they were greedily caught at. With exultation they quitted the land which gave them birth — their friends — their countrymen; with exultation they beheld that which they fondly believed was to be to them a land flowing with milk and honey. How rapidly, alas, were they fated to awake from their visions of happiness, to have their hopes converted into the blackest despair! How signally too were the sins of the Portuguese, who had sold into slavery the unfortunate natives of Africa, now about to be visited on their own descendants.

Once arrived in the colonies, they found themselves beyond redemption at the mercy of those by whom they had been deluded, and who now, throwing off the mask, sold the astounded creatures to the highest bidders,* by whom they were distributed over the country, without, as I have been informed, in many instances, the least regard to the ties of family. In every conceivable point of view their lot was

* See Note 16.

infinitely more miserable than even that of the negroes; for although exposed, like these, to the same treatment as to the degree of toil and coercion, they were far from being sharers with them in the advantages intended to be secured by the Abolition Act. The black slaves had the right, at any period, of purchasing their immediate freedom; not so with the white slaves. "Seven years," said the bond; and well resolved was each Shylock to insist to the last on the pound of flesh.

But even had the Portuguese, like the negroes, possessed the right of offering redemption-money, it would have availed them nothing. Far from their country, with which no communication was carried on, save through the circuitous route of England, it would have been impossible for them to quit the place to which they had been beguiled; they must have betaken themselves to the woods, and then, compelled by want of food to return to the vicinity of the towns or plantations, they would have been seized and condemned as vagrants; in other words, their former state as slaves on the sugar estates to the planters, would have been

or if, by chance, one did overcome the vigilance of the watchmen, and make his way towards Government House, he was seized and shipped off to the coast; an effectual way, truly, of precluding the possibility of his obtaining a hearing.*

The constitutions of these white slaves soon began to break under this treatment. Disease in hideous forms was not slow in exhibiting itself; and it was shown beyond a doubt, in this instance, that the labour, which is so fatal even to negroes, can never be performed by men whose bones and sinews are covered with a white skin.

Whole families, and theirs was the happiest lot, were swept from the face of the earth; while those who had the misfortune partially to recover, were, if unable to pursue their labour, turned off houseless and friendless by the vampires who had banqueted to the last drop on their hearts' blood. Their condition became so truly piteous as to move the very blacks to compassion. So broken in spirit were these free-born subjects of the crown of Portugal, that they were to be seen suing on their

* See Note 18.

knees the charity of the British West India negro slaves; and the charity sued for was never refused by the kind-hearted, calumniated black.

At length the report of their sufferings,* and of the startling rapidity with which they were dropping into the grave, travelled beyond the confines of the plantations, and was rendered the subject of inquiry by several persons who had already been conspicuous for their endeavours to ameliorate the condition of the negroes. The result was, the bringing to light the particulars I have detailed.

Immediate steps were taken to submit them to the executive; with what success in other islands, I have not yet discovered, but the following petition to the Lieutenant-Governor of Trinidad will speak for *that* colony. I claim for it the attention of the public; it is, I may say, a "voice from the dead;" for all who spoke then, without doubt, are now in the grave. It cannot fail to thrill the hearts of the natives of Fayal and Madeira; to them it must prove a document equally interesting and painful. Let them attend

* See Note 19.

to it, as to the dying words and warning of their lost countrymen.

" To His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of Trinidad, &c. &c. &c.

" The humble petition of the undersigned subjects of the Crown of Portugal, respectfully sheweth :

" That with many others of their countrymen, they were induced, by certain evil-disposed persons, under false pretences, to quit their native country, Fayal, to become agricultural labourers in this colony.

" Of the whole number thus cajoled, one-third only are still in existence. The rest have fallen victims to the unhealthiness of the climate, or to the cruelties of the slavery system, to which we, equally with the unfortunate blacks, have been subjected; for let the speculators in human blood deny it as they will, the awful calamity which has occurred among our countrymen in so short a period as ten months, must have resulted from one

or the other of these fatal causes, or from both combined.

"Men, women, and children,* have suffered the greatest misery and oppression on the several estates, where they have been forced to work far beyond their strength, and by coercion of the whip, without proper shelter at night, or adequate food during the day.

"The consolations of their religion have been denied them in the hour of sickness and of death; whilst the bodies of the miserable victims of avarice have been thrown into holes and ditches without Christian burial.

"The cries of the fatherless children and widows have been loud in the land, but there was no response of Christian charity to soften their grief; no arm of justice to relieve them from the bonds of the oppressor.

"Few are they who are left to tell the tale of woe.

"Your Excellency has often been apprised of these truths, but yet our sufferings are unheeded.

* See Notes 20, 21, & 22.

We have been advised that an appeal to the Governor-General, for the information of His Britannic Majesty's Government, would be attended to, but we hope your Excellency will obviate the necessity of such appeal by mercifully acceding to the prayer of your humble Petitioners, which is,

" That your Excellency will be pleased to collect together the few Portuguese labourers yet in existence in this colony;

" That you will humanely relieve their immediate and pressing wants, particularly those of the poor and helpless orphans; and that you will cause them to be transported back to their native country.

(Signed,)

" ROSA CONSTANCIA, who has lost her *husband* and *three* children in ten months.

" FELICIDA PERPÉTUA DI CASTRO, who lost her *husband* and *one* child in ten months.

" MARIA CONSTANCIA, who has lost *two* children in ten months.

" MARIANA FRANCISCA, who has lost *four* children in ten months.

"JOSEF FRANCISCO MACIEDO, who has lost his *wife* and *four* children in ten months.

"ANTONIO FRANCISCO DABLA, who has lost *two* children.

"ANNA PERPETUA, the mother of seven children.

"FRANCISCO DE UTRO PERREIRA, who has a wife and four children at Fayal.*

* * * * * *

"*Trinidad*, 1*st October*, 1836."

Can the annals of England, or indeed of any country, present aught more abominably atrocious than what is here revealed? And are these demon acts to be persevered in?

Are the natives of Fayal and Madeira without anxiety for their hapless countrymen and relatives, now slaves in the West Indies? Will they not strive at every cost to save those few of their brethren who by some miracle may yet be found lingering on this side the grave?

The mother land too; will she, without remon-

* See Note 25 for the remaining signatures.

strance, allow her free-born sons to remain in bondage?

"I looked up to my God for pardon, and to my country for revenge," was the Englishman's exclamation, when detailing the preparations made for his torture and death!

Do the subjects of Portugal look with less confidence to THEIR country? Is she so changed from the "spirit of yore" as to be without one patriot bold enough to raise his voice?

I now beseech all who are hesitating on the subject of expatriating themselves to the West Indies as labourers, to read over and over again this chapter. I beseech them to read over and over again the Notes* in the Appendix. "On my knees" I implore them to ponder, to stop while yet on the border of the precipice; and if I save one fellow-creature from rushing headlong to certain misery and destruction, my toils will be re-

* "The Arab, of Liverpool, is arrived from Gravesend, with nine labourers who emigrated from England as substitutes for the emancipated negroes, but found themselves completely unable to stand a tropical sun. Twenty-two other labourers went with them to the West Indies, of whom nineteen are dead of the fever, and the remaining three were left in the hospital."—*Globe*, 27*th April*, 1836.

paid; I shall not lament the time passed in the depraved community which I have endeavoured to expose, and shall be prepared to encounter with, if possible, increased indifference, the odium and malignity of which I well know I shall become the object.*

* Since this chapter was written, regular preparations have been made in the colonies to draw upon Europe for labourers. In Jamaica the Honourable House of Assembly has passed a resolution to allow 12*l.* currency for the *importation* of every adult person, and 8*l.* for those under twelve years of age.—Vide "*Times*" of *October 20th.* 1836.

CHAPTER XIII.

Colonial Governors—How selected by the Tories—Never supported by that Party—Difficulties encountered by them—Firmness of the Whig Ministry—Sir Lionel Smith—Barbadoes on his Arrival—His Government—A Tory Governor—Description of the Colony under him—Portrait of a Governor—as he should *not* be.

SURELY the executive must have shamefully slumbered at its post, or still more shamefully gone with the stream; otherwise, how could these abominations have reached the height described? How could depravity and corruption, both in the public departments and in the private societies, have taken so deep a root? Such, methinks, will be the exclamation of every thinking mind; and to such I will respond, by entering into some observations on a class of functionaries on whom it

might fairly be expected the interests of the colonies must depend in no inconsiderable degree.

In some of the preceding pages I have alluded occasionally to certain individuals who at different periods, and in different islands, have held the important office of governor, but it has been merely in a general way: to two only have I endeavoured particularly to draw attention; the one, alas, numbered with the dead; the other, even more fatally for the cause of humanity, still amongst the living.

I will now enlarge a little more upon the subject, premising that in the selection for these appointments, government, even in the days of Toryism, (days, however, which for so many reasons every man who loves his country must hope have passed away, never to return,) appears to have been guided by principles very opposite to those which, until lately, have usually operated in England in the distribution of a minister's patronage. It has rarely occurred, even under the Liverpools, the Bathursts, the Sidmouths, that the colonial governors have been indebted for their nomination to

intrigue or party feeling.* They have generally been officers of distinguished rank and merit in the army and navy; taught by their professional feelings to eschew the arena of politics, and to have solely at heart the faithful and zealous discharge of their duties, whether Whig or Tory presided at the helm in England. Hence it has followed, that on a change of ministry at home, confidence has not been withdrawn from the colonial governors, although the nominees of an administration of different politics; and this confidence has seldom been betrayed. Of course, some officers, talented in their immediate line, may have been found wanting in the qualifications requisite for a governor; occasionally there may have been one of a weak and indolent character, another of a harsh and despotic one; still, viewing them altogether, they reflect credit on the discernment of those by whom they were chosen, and speak volumes for

* The appointment of the Duke of Manchester must, however, always stand as an exception. From this man's administration, and the immoral example set by him, we can trace much of the lamentable condition, political as well as social, in which Jamaica is now placed.

the general talent and integrity of the officers of the British army and navy. But they have never been SUPPORTED by the ministry at home: herein lies the true cause of the rise, progress, and continuance of the abominations on which I have expatiated. Their powers are likewise more circumscribed than the English public are generally aware of.

In many of the islands are mimic Houses of Commons, where all local affairs are canvassed by a class of men, bound by their public pledges, as much as by their private feelings, to resist to the last every interference of the mother country with the negroes. They can stop supplies—refuse to ratify the appointments of the executive—at all events, which answers the same end, refuse to vote the salaries annexed thereto. The moment, therefore, that a governor displays a wish to innovate upon the system which for so many generations has been transmitted from father to son; the moment that he expresses sentiments inimical to the continuance, not only of the slave-trade, however privately carried on, but even of slavery itself, (and

what man, reared in that best of schools, the united service of Great Britain, does not regard the one and the other with the deepest abhorrence?) a powerful party is at once arrayed against him; scarcely any measure of importance can be carried by him without the severest struggle; orators, such as they are, in the different Houses of Assembly, strain every nerve to bring him into odium with the public, and by a course of loathsome invective, to lead him into acts or expressions which may subject him to be removed from the government. They allow no opportunity to escape of transmitting to England petitions, and memorials, and remonstrances, and resolutions, agreed to at general meetings, on the subject of the misrule and oppression under which the colony is groaning. It is true that the falsehood of the whole is at once laid bare; but, nothing abashed, they proceed again and again to the attack, supported by members of their party in the British Parliament, until the ministry, wearied by the constant interruption given to what is considered more important duties, by the cabals of a few

miserable islands, either displace the governor altogether, or remove him to another command, naming in his stead one more likely to CONCILIATE! Absurd, fatal idea! as if anything could conciliate West India colonists short of surrendering to their tender mercies the entire negro population, and of converting the king's representative into a useless, contemptible puppet. The object, however, is gained; the removal in question occasions a species of interregnum, a colonial civilian administers the government, every measure prejudicial to slavery politics enacted by his predecessor is speedily abolished or neutralized; the "clique" is at once strengthened, and still strengthens itself daily, until the arrival of the new ruler, when, if he too should lean to the side of humanity, the same intrigues recommence, the same results ensue, and the colonies remain in their original condition. Thus did the Whigs find the West Indies on their accession to power. Their first grand measure of Reform cleared the boroughmongers' Parliament of many nominees of the slavery party, and enabled them on this subject to legislate with effect,

according to the humane and enlightened principles of their party. As a consequence, the bill for the abolition of slavery followed in rapid succession the bill for the abolition of rotten boroughs. This blessed act, which alone should immortalize the Whigs, and for ever secure them the veneration of the good of every clime, at once struck a deadly blow at the accursed system which, under their political opponents, had so long thriven and been encouraged in every department in the colonies.

The planters now saw their powers of doing evil on the verge of being reduced almost to nothing.

They found that a solemn account would in future be demanded of their proceedings towards the negroes; that they would be vigilantly watched; and that it was resolutely determined that the measures prepared for the welfare of the blacks should not be permitted to evaporate in words.

The instructions to the governors were given in this spirit; they received no secret orders, counteracting the public ones, but were expressly told, that they were to see the wishes of the English people carried honestly and vigorously into effect;

by which alone, the protection of his Majesty's Government was to be acquired. Had not this been inflexibly adhered to by the colonial minister of the day, had the examples of some of his predecessors been followed, that of my Lord Bathurst for example, who for the sake of a little official tranquillity, or of adding a few votes to a government majority, reckless of the misery entailed thereby upon thousands, allowed the governors to be sacrificed to conspiracies and misrepresentations, the West Indies would have now been the scene of anarchy and bloodshed, and the miserable negroes further removed from freedom than they were a hundred years ago.

Let not this be forgotten by the people of England, when the Whigs come to be weighed in the balance.

And the Governors themselves,—had they wavered, had they been moved by the thought of the dreadful results prognosticated unless they temporized, and advised temporizing measures to Ministers, all might have been lost; but they were firm; with one solitary exception, (and I hope

yet to live to brand him as he merits,) they went heart and soul with Ministers, and strove to fulfil their instructions to the letter.

Where all acted so faithfully to their king, and to their country, it may appear invidious to particularize; at the risk, however, I must allude to the officer named at this important moment to the high office of Governor-General of the Windward and Leeward Islands — Major-General Sir Lionel Smith, who, during the short period he has presided there, has advanced the cause of civilization and humanity to an extent miraculous even to the very planters themselves. He assumed the command under no common difficulties. He had to legislate for a society, to a man opposed to the Government whose views he was to carry into effect. He arrived, moreover, at Barbadoes after one, who, whatever his integrity in private life, which I believe is proverbial, or his social and convivial talents, which fame reports most brilliant, or his gallantry in the field, to which the whole army would cheerfully bear testimony, was, from his love of ease and comfort, not to say

indolence, manifestly incompetent to cope with the turbulent spirits of a West India community.

Under his administration, (I do not wish, nor is it necessary, to allude to his own supposed political bias,) the slavery party had greatly increased in strength; and when his successor assumed the government, he found that party more than ever resolved to pursue the system of opposition to liberal measures, which had hitherto proved so propitious to its ends.

It was soon discovered, however, that every complaint against the Governor would be unattended to at the colonial office, if not based on truth and justice; and that he himself was neither to be intimidated by opposition and menace, nor thrown off his guard by cajolery. This did not prevent numerous obstacles from being cast in the way of measures brought forward by him for the general good. His declarations were distorted and misrepresented in all possible forms; sentiments were attributed to him the remotest from truth; he was exposed to the rancorous personal abuse of mob orators, sugar boilers, and plantation

attorneys; this abuse was re-echoed by the scurrilous press. Such is an outline of the trials he had to encounter. One false step must have been fatal to himself, and perhaps for a time to the cause confided to his hands; and how he avoided the snares spread for him is a lesson to those who believe that a government must be conducted by intriguing, tortuous expedients. He pursued the straightforward, honourable path, neither looking to the right nor to the left, moved neither by friend nor foe.

He acted conscientiously, firmly, temperately; he paved the way for the easy working of the Abolition Act; and when other islands were convulsed, when martial law was either threatened or proclaimed, when one colony was stained with the blood of the negro, and another was resounding with his shrieks, Barbadoes, thanks to Sir Lionel Smith, stood proudly and preeminently tranquil.*

I must now comment, but, alas, in a strain widely different, upon another appointment, which has

* In Demarara one was hung and thirty-seven transported. In St. Lucia, *ninety thousand* lashes were inflicted on negroes in a single week.

been followed by serious evil, and which, besides being injurious to the best interests of thousands, might have involved the very ministry itself in a series of inextricable difficulties.

Many of my readers must remember the feelings with which some few years back was received in the House of Commons, the announcement that an individual holding high office under the Crown, and closely allied by blood as well as by politics to the most conspicuous among the Ultra-Tories, had become a defaulter to an enormous amount.

Many, too, must remember the eloquence with which more than one member denounced this defaulter, and those by whom he was supported; and it should not be forgotten by any right-minded Englishman, with what insolent contempt the Tory administration of that day treated public opinion, by removing out of harm's way to a Government in the West Indies, the man charged before the representatives of the British people in Parliament with an act, perhaps above all others the most revolting to the feelings of a gentleman,—with a pecuniary fraud.

Could the Whigs, on attaining power, have been ignorant of the accusations which had been preferred against him? Assuredly not. What demon of evil, then, possessed them, when instead of hurling him from the height to which Tory corruption had raised him, they were persuaded to remove him from a Government of very minor consequence, by comparison, to one of the most important and lucrative in the West Indies—to a colony which has proved herself at all periods difficult to rule, but rendered a thousand-fold more so at this critical period, when a liberal and humane system was to be essayed? And who could have been insane enough to expect that such a system could find support in one reared in the most ultra schools of Orangeism and Toryism?

In all probability I shall describe hereafter, with some detail, the frightful scenes acted in this island at the time the Abolition Bill came into force. At present, I shall confine myself to its general state, as I saw it in the years 1833 and 1834, and as it still remains in 1838. Whether this state is to be attributed solely and

personally to the Governor, or whether regarded as the effect of the intrigues of base and irresponsible advisers, is no subject for public consideration; on him does the onus lie.

Under his administration, not only have the beneficial measures effected, or left in progress by his predecessors, been destroyed, but half a century, under governors the most talented, would scarcely suffice to counteract the confusion and misery which now prevail. Those who have resided any length of time in the West Indies, and minutely examined into the capabilities of the island alluded to, are well aware it might be rendered of almost equal value to England with Jamaica. In every direction are to be seen large tracts of uncultivated land, the soil of which is so uncommonly rich and fertile, that persons, experienced in colonial matters, and in the management of sugar estates, have calculated that half a million of industrious peasantry could be supported there. In the face of this, so far from any encouragement being afforded to the *free settlers*, or inducement to invest their capital in the purchase of

any portion of the land in question, every official impediment is thrown in the way of their obtaining grants on any thing like equitable terms. The policy is evident; the planters are averse to augmenting the competitors in trade; and are, moreover, aware that, with these new properties, whether extensive or not, an instantaneous system of free labour must arise.

In like manner are the free artisans opposed: indeed they may be said to be in want of the very necessaries of life. The planters are anxious that none but their own slaves should be protected in any calling, as from them they can demand a large bonus, or monthly taxation, for permission to follow the same; and can, moreover, claim a heavy per-centage out of the hard-earned gainings of these slaves, in the shape of repayment for goods, or implements supplied at the outset.

Proceed to visit the districts of the island; they will be found left altogether to chance. No roads are formed through the woods; no facilities afforded for a speedy conveyance to the remoter parts; every thing, in fact, is in a wild and savage

state. The reader has already had an insight into the private society of the colony,—he has seen that burglary, and other lawless deeds, are committed there with impunity, if not rendered the steps to preferment and respect. From all these things combined, are we not justified in proclaiming that in this magnificent island, this island, to which nature has been so bountiful and man so faulty, the free population is depressed, — the bondsman cruelly tyrannized over,—and the educated, the peaceable citizen, the judges, and every public officer of worth, reviled, insulted, and in fear of their lives.*

How long is this colony to be thus sunk in wretchedness? Will not a liberal ministry extend to her a protecting arm; failing which, will no member of the senate cause an inquiry to be instituted? * * * * * *

I have painted two governors as they *are:* I will conclude by presenting the "portrait of a governor as he *should not* be."

* *Vide* extract from the *Colonial Observer*, given in Sir Andrew Halliday's valuable work on the West Indies.

He should not be one who, for the support given by him in parliament, to every corrupt job brought forward by a corrupt ministry, received a post which should have been bestowed only on some brave man, whose life had been dedicated to his country, and his blood shed in her service.

He should not be one who, coming into office shortly after one of the best and most talented men that ever appeared in that department, not only immediately shows himself the opposite of his predecessor, but has the folly to destroy the system introduced by him, and the meanness to persecute many of those by the same predecessor selected or respected!

He should not permit himself to be made the tool of a faction, nor, whatever his private sympathies, allow the government residence to become the receptacle for the informer and the spy.

He should not be one so entirely destitute of pecuniary means, as to be forced to live literally on the charity of the very people whom he should control; thereby laying himself open to the grievous suspicion of not daring to refuse his

concurrence in any measure, however prejudicial to the public good, when proposed to him by those whose bounty feeds him.

He should not be one who is so far forgetful of what is due to his elevated position,—a position which renders an example from him of deep import to the community at large,—as to associate on terms of intimacy with, indeed making them his boon companions, men against whom every respectable house is closed.

He should not be one, whose language and jests are such, as to prevent any man of honour from conducting his daughter or his wife to "Government House," lest the outraged feelings of the parent, or the husband, should hurry him into acts inconsistent in a loyal man towards a high officer of his sovereign, and which, as a good man, it would be painful for him to adopt towards grey hairs, although those grey hairs overshadowed the brow of the profligate and the bad.

He should not be one, who, called upon to carry into effect an important measure of government, at variance with his recognised public and

private bias, consents to remain that government's servant, while all his proceedings have a direct tendency to bring ill success on the measure in question, and the probable downfal of the administration employing him.

He should not render himself the laughing-stock of the senseless portion of the community, nor the contempt of the reflecting, by appearing daily arrayed in fantastic masquerade garbs, reviewing a set of mountebanks styling themselves generals and colonels; frequenting their public breakfasts, and spouting and brawling at their drunken orgies.

He should not, because Her Majesty's military officers were unable to conceal their disgust at these proceedings, and regarded as any thing but an honour the being invited to his assemblies, act in the manner he believed most likely to prove offensive to their feelings as soldiers, by calling privates* of their regiment into his chamber, and there drenching them with liquor, until they

* Extract from the regimental orders of the —— regiment:—
"On the intercession and earnest entreaty of ——, together with assurance from His Excellency, that the same cause for irregularity

disgraced the corps they belonged to, amid the jeers of the sycophants who assisted.

He should not, if required in his official capacity to attend once a year a Roman-catholic place of worship, in honour of the creed professed by a large portion of the people among whom he lived, there demean himself with insult and irreverence; nor to the disturbance of the sacred ceremony, indulge in bigoted, by-gone, ORANGE jests.

At all events, if such a governor there be, is there a man in England who will say that such should continue in power?

should not again occur, the Lieutenant-Colonel is induced to waive a court-martial, &c.

"Soldiers should bear in mind, that when on any military duty, they are on no account to receive wine, or other intoxicating liquors, from any person, however high in rank."

CHAPTER XIV.

Addresses of Mr. Stanley previous to 1st August—How received—Conduct of some of the Public Officers in the Colonies—Tory Preaching and Advice—Tory Governments always averse to Emancipation—Dangers prophesied—The Prophets—Their Victims—Hint to Government concerning a certain Solicitor-General—Antigua—Attempt to ruin that Colony—Negroes kept in Ignorance of what was really intended—Anecdote in proof—Worse treated as 1st August approached—Cat-o'-nine-tails—The Abolitionists persecuted—Mr. S. Le Fevre—Barbadoes described by him.

LITTLE is known with certainty in England of the manner in which the eventful period when the rights of human nature were at length to be upheld and vindicated, and our country relieved of the foul stain by which she had been so long disgraced, passed off in the West Indies.

It has been widely circulated, and by some

believed, that the colonies were saved from convulsion by the very colonists themselves, who disinterestedly came forward in support of the government by which they had been ruined.

On this subject, therefore, an impartial and authentic version must prove acceptable to many classes of the public, and I flatter myself that the one I am about to present will fully deserve this character.

Long before the 1st of August, Mr. Stanley had over and over again addressed the colonists in the language not only of counsel, but of entreaty. No toil had been spared by him to propitiate their acceptance of a measure to which the Ministry and the British Parliament stood so sacredly pledged. Eloquently and forcibly did he point out to the colonial legislatures the glorious opportunity before them of securing to themselves the attachment of the slave population, and the respect and gratitude of the people of Great Britain, as well as of the other nations who had an interest more or less direct in the happy result of the momentous experiment. He glanced at the

costly sacrifices which had been made by the mother country in their favour, and who demanded nothing in return but their cheerful concurrence in the extinction of negro slavery. That the extinction was resolved upon, was clearly and firmly laid down; but whether that extinction was to be brought about peaceably or the contrary, must, as he truly observed, depend upon the cordial co-operation of all classes of the colonists, especially of the colonial legislatures. He implored them to silence any feelings of jealousy which the controversies of past years might have excited, to deliberately estimate the progress and state of public opinion as bearing on the subject not in England only, but throughout the civilized world; to reflect on the difficulties with which Parliament and the Ministry had to contend in maturing the measure; to bear in mind the enormous grant which had been voted without a murmur, notwithstanding the condition of the national finances; and then to unite with him in the zealous prosecution of the great design to a successful issue. This, indeed, is but a feeble outline of the address of the dis-

tinguished statesman, but it will suffice to evince the spirit of the whole.

How did the colonists receive it? They doggedly refused to be moved. To the last moment they indulged in the contemplation of the downfal of the Government, of which the Right Honourable Secretary formed so prominent a part, and a consequent change in the intended colonial plans.

"Let us struggle on," preached one of their leading organs; "who knows but the next packet may bring intelligence of the removal of the Whigs from office; then shall we find the crystal drop which the lovely lotus, flowering in the boundless and arid wastes of Africa, enshrines in her bosom for the relief of the thirsty traveller. Under a Whig administration the colonies have never received liberal and just treatment, while under Tory dominion they have invariably experienced protection and support, and may look for the like again." And well they might, too, according to *their* estimate of the terms protection and support. Well did they know that every Tory Ministry, for the preceding thirty years, while seeming to go

hand in hand with the abolitionists, were the only substantial enemies of liberty; and that upon any beneficial or practicable project towards amelioration and ultimate emancipation being proposed, they invariably wavered, yielded to the slavery cry of ruin and insurrection, and thereby defeated all the efforts of the philanthropists; well did they know that the Tories had been the real, because the only powerful, champions of colonial bondage.

But to return from this digression; in conformity with the advice tendered by their leaders, it was determined that every opposition should be offered to the proposition of Mr. Stanley, as even if the opposition could not prevent ultimate emancipation, it might still delay the evil day. Petitions of the nature which had hitherto been so successful crowded on the ministry. They represented that it would be impossible to avert the inevitable convulsion in the order of society, and the frightful destruction of life and property which must ensue from the attempt, should it ever be made, to enforce the provisions of the order in Council. In continuation, it was declared that the colonists had

been placed by the measures of Government in the most difficult and dangerous position, and that their forbearance alone had preserved the peace and good order of the colonies, and ought to ensure them the respect and sympathy of all classes of his Majesty's subjects.

At the meetings where resolutions of this description were agreed to, individuals holding the highest government appointments were to be seen presiding, and even the law-officers of the Crown were to be found publishing and circulating pamphlets or essays in the forms of memorials, counselling treasonable factious opposition to the King and his Ministers. In one colony more particularly an address was drawn up by the Solicitor-General, in which, among many paragraphs vying with each other in violence and insolence, was one to the effect (indeed I believe I quote verbatim) *that the free inhabitants had received with the* feelings of men deeply injured and cruelly oppressed, the proposition of Mr. Stanley, in the House of Commons, for the immediate emancipation of the negroes, under a deceptive system of

apprenticeship for a limited period, but that they were fully resolved never to yield but to masterful violence.

It may be well imagined how much these proceedings (with further specimens of which I will not disgust the reader) tended to spread consternation throughout the islands, and to keep awake the feeling against ministers. An attempt was made to enlist on the side of the planters the free coloured population, a class who, until then, had ever been treated with the utmost scorn; they were implored to ally themselves with their white brethren, now that all their properties were on the verge of destruction*—when hordes of lawless plunderers would, ere long, invade the peaceful fields, and destroy with a daring and reckless hand the fair fruits of their industry. These, however, many of whom in their own persons, or in those of their kindred, had witnessed the horrors of slavery, scouted the proffered alliance.

Let it not be surmised for an instant that the influential, and for the colonies talented men, by

* Word for word from a Barbadoes newspaper.

whom these acts were planned, entertained the remotest apprehension of the realization of the dangers which they foreboded. Were an inquiry to be made as to the eventual lot of those who publicly came forward in the West Indies as preachers of alarm; who more loudly than others predicted ruin to the colonies, and decay of the commerce of Great Britain; it would be found that they are enriched to an extent beyond belief, having laid out every shilling of their fortunes in the purchase of sugar estates, and are, moreover, (like the man who, filling the office of King's Solicitor-General, advised his brother colonists only to yield obedience to the king's commands when coerced thereto by masterful violence,) daily and hourly adding to the same. On the other hand, those who listened to their pernicious counsel to dispose of their properties at every sacrifice, and to escape from the horrors impending, are now pining in ruin, in wretchedness, and in exile, cursing their own weakness, and the sordid miscreants by whom that weakness was so cruelly and so basely turned to account.

In the midst, however, of these transactions, the

leading performers were thrown into some confusion by the intelligence that the owners of slaves in the island of Antigua had determined to forego the right of retaining for six years longer the gratuitous services of such slaves, and had granted to them accordingly instant and unqualified freedom. When it was perceived that no appearance of riot or idleness followed this measure, the planters of the other islands were in despair at this practical refutation of their theories; and lest it might operate to the prejudice of their schemes, hit upon a plan from which great events were anticipated.

With whom originated "the damnable and damning iniquity," (for such, I feel convinced, it will be characterised by the reader,) I will not inquire; suffice it to say that a commission (Trinidad had the honour of furnishing the members) secretly proceeded to Antigua, with the object of disseminating discontent, mistrust, and disaffection among the emancipated negroes; which was to be effected by impressing upon the minds of these latter that their masters had only freed them to be

spared the necessity of supporting them; that new laws were soon to come into force, when labourers would flock from other countries, and they, the poor blacks, with their children, be consigned to beggary; that the commission, actuated by motives of humanity, had come among them to offer refuge and employment in the fertile island of Trinidad, where high wages and considerate treatment would be secured to them. From this it was to be expected that the negroes, exasperated by the treachery they were taught to believe had been exercised towards them, would rise in tumult, and perhaps (I will not say this was hoped) consign the different plantations to flames, and spare neither sex nor age from their knives; or, refraining from these extremities, that they would, at all events, escape from the country where they were free, to accept the condition of slavery in other lands. On either of these contingencies coming to pass, the purposes of the plotters would have been equally served; if the first, it would have led to a well-founded alarm, lest a similar result should follow throughout the colonies when the day should come for the

UNQUALIFIED emancipation of the negroes; if the second, it would go to prove that this unqualified emancipation was so far from being regarded by the negroes themselves as an advantage, that of their own accord they abandoned the place where the experiment had been tried.

To what extent the minds of the poor people might have been worked upon it is difficult to say, although there can exist little doubt that great injury would have been effected. Fortunately, however, some glimmering of the scheme transpired, and reaching the knowledge of the inhabitants of Antigua, enabled them to prepare for the coming of the treacherous visitors, who were compelled to be off with all speed, to renew their machinations in their own islands. Riot and tumult had been prophesied;—the prophets to be chiefly dreaded are those who have the power of fulfilling their own prophecies; and to this end every art that ingenuity could suggest was employed. The negroes were to be prevented as much as possible from learning what was really intended towards them; the most conflicting reports were circulated

among them; at one time, that they were to be free immediately; at another, that the king had changed his mind, and they were to remain slaves; again, that the women only were to be emancipated; then only the children, and so on.

All this would occasion a feverish excitement among them, which might produce some slight manifestation of impatience, easy to be exaggerated into one of disaffection, and to be treated accordingly.

In some of the islands this scheme was, by the strong personal efforts of the governors, much neutralized, though impossible to be entirely defeated in opposition to the great majority of the planters. I had a proof of this in a colony* where certainly the Governor had sincerely at heart the welfare of the blacks, and had done every thing in his power to place them in possession of the truth. Nevertheless, only within a few weeks of the important first of August, upon travelling in company with several brother officers to the distant points of the island, we were met at every corner by negroes, supplicating intelligence as to their future lot.

* Tobago, where Major-General Darling is Governor.

Moreover, as the time drew nearer for the slaves becoming apprentices, the more did the owners throw aside all spirit of conciliation, the more did they suffer their rancour and distrust to appear; and though there never was a time when the unfortunate negroes were so patient under all their sufferings, (such is the effect of hope on the human mind, even in its most degraded state,) it is notorious that as the period advanced when the accursed whip was to be wrested from the arm of the master, never were the slaves more causelessly and mercilessly flogged.

Here I may mention, as it well depicts the planter-feelings, that there was one clause of the "Act" which obtained the unqualified approbation of the "masters;" this was the one specifying, that in future the negroes were not to be flogged with a "cart-whip," but with a "cat-o'-nine-tails," such as is used in the army. When this was made known, the barracks were infested by persons offering money to the drummers to make up for them instruments of torture, *secundum artem*, and "to be powerful and severe" were always

the last words. Many officers, (among others, the one I had the pleasure of serving under,) were actually written to, with the request that their men might be permitted to prepare "cats." Of course, such requests were treated with contempt; but they served to afford us a tolerable insight into the character of those who preferred them.

Not only were the negroes worse treated than ever at this particular period, but every individual, especially the teachers of the gospel, known for humanity, received a large addition to the usual persecutions of which they were the object. They were now regarded as deadly personal enemies by the opposite party, who were loud in their threats, that, upon any riot arising among the blacks which should require an appeal to arms for suppression, all who had directly or indirectly exerted themselves on the anti-slavery side, should be among the first and foremost victims. To give a colour to the murders which were contemplated, and prevent their having the appearance of being committed on persons against whom no harm was known, many were cited before the local

authorities, where, after having been reviled, and told to observe the condition to which they had helped to bring the owners of slaves, they were bound over in large sums to keep the peace until the first of August! Had they, therefore, eventually been put to death, proofs would at once have been given by their assassins, that they had long been publicly known as conspirators against the general safety, and had fallen when again plotting against it.

It might be injurious to the innocent parties themselves, were I to name those who were thus insulted by those who had insulted the King's Government,—who were thus sought to be stigmatized with the crime of treason, by the veriest traitors on the face of the earth; I will in consequence bring but one before the public, and that one, only because he is far, far removed from the malice of his enemies; he is now "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." This was Mr. Shaw Le Fevre. The letter which follows will speak to the reader's conviction: I present it without comment:—

" *Cavan Hall, Barbadoes, July* 21, 1836.

" Seeing your manuscript, I thought I might venture to look into it; and although I gave but a hasty glance, I found you had done what has not before, I believe, been the case with any author. You have developed some frightful facts, in language not to be misunderstood. I lament to say, that I could, from my own personal knowledge, corroborate you in many respects. * * * * * * * I am rather surprised you have not dwelt more fully on the HORRID and DISGUSTING scenes that have taken place in Bridge-Town. I could fill a volume from my own ocular demonstration. I endeavoured, shortly after my arrival, to obtain redress in some few cases, but I found it was quite useless: I only got insult from the magistrates.

" There is now some amendment, but a vast deal of iniquity is still practised. On one occasion (it would not be believed in England) two sapient magistrates, members of the House of Assembly, in the abundance of their wisdom insisted, most illegally, on my entering into

securities to keep the peace 'till the first of August,' the day on which the Act took effect: and for what cause, think you, I was thus treated? Forsooth, these ignorant people stated that I had too much influence with the slave population! in addition to this, these men in authority absolutely made me pay twenty dollars fees, which they pocketed. When I reflect, that, for a considerable period I presided as a magistrate in England, over a population of near five-and-twenty thousand persons, I confess I did not anticipate such treatment in the West Indies: but to this, and other insults, I have been obliged to submit, for holding an appointment under the British Government. * * *

* * * *

I observe you mention my having been called before the House of Assembly: I am satisfied that I was thus summoned with the view of degrading me. I did not disguise from the House that I had only done that I considered I had a right to do—namely, to explain the third clause of the Act to those who did not understand it

fully. The poor creatures who had been to England or Ireland were certainly free, but many of the owners of such slaves did not like to comply with that part of the Act; and I admit, that I entertain very pleasurable feelings at the recollection that I was the means of putting many a fellow-being at that period, and for many MONTHS AFTER I HAD BEEN called before the House, in the way to obtain that freedom to which the law entitled him. In acting thus I was convinced I was not doing an injustice to the owners; and I told the House that it was quite evident to me, that the Government who could grant so liberal a sum as twenty millions for compensation, would certainly appropriate a portion thereof to the owners of slaves claiming their freedom under the third clause of the Act in question. The result has proved I was correct."

Having afforded an insight into the *spirit* with which the colonists were prepared to meet the first of August, I will endeavour to portray the effects which attended it.

CHAPTER XV.

Martial Law desired—The King's Troops—Feeling in the Army—Trifling Exceptions—Trinidad looked to by other Colonies—Why—Contemplated Butchery—Lieutenant-Colonel Hardy, 19th Regiment—Warlike Preparations—Militia—1st August—The Governor's Address to the Negroes—How received—Sanguinary Feeling against them—Trinidad at Night—Ludicrous Militia Dispute.

A FEW hours only were wanting, and the Abolition Act would become the law of the land. No signs of riot or impatience had yet been witnessed among the negroes, and what was still more embarrassing to their masters, they appeared determined, (whether of their own accord, or by the tutoring of their well-wishers, is of no importance,) that neither outrage nor oppression should lure them from the passive position they had taken up.

A proclamation of MARTIAL LAW was however, if possible, to be effected.

The colonists were particularly anxious that His Majesty's troops of the line should be brought into collision with the negroes, calculating that if blood were spilt, it would be believed in England that the experiment of "emancipation" was too hazardous to be persisted in.

Reasonings, flatteries, persuasions, were all employed to enlist the officers of the army on their side. They had little conception of the chivalrous spirit reigning among the followers of the noble profession, and that humanity is ever the companion of true courage. They were astounded, therefore, when they found that HERE predominated sympathy towards the negroes, indignation at their treatment, respect for the meekness they displayed, with a full resolve, on the part of the military, not to lend themselves in any shape to the measures which they could not but perceive were being planned.

This I may affirm to have been the general feeling in the army, for although one* or two junior

* One gentleman traversed half a colony at the head of troops, without experiencing even a show of resistance; nevertheless in a

officers may have been weak enough to accept colonial appointments at this period, such as those of magistrates, and commandants of militia, and may have had their silly vanity gratified by hearing themselves styled for a few weeks Generals or Colonels; this was not sufficient to enable the colonists to disguise from themselves that the military in general were against them, and that to their own resources alone must they look to effect the much desired proclamation of martial law.

It is not necessary I should describe the attempts made in each island for this diabolical end, which would have stripped the negro of all protection. I will simply detail those in Trinidad, which are more or less the counterparts of what the

flaming despatch to Government, he made mention of more distinguished officers, such as HIS Adjutant-General, HIS Quarter-Master-General, than did the Duke of Wellington after Waterloo.

Among others noticed by him, was one bearing the name of Molasses, represented, if I remember, as a great proficient in military tactics, evinced by the manner in which he destroyed sundry negro huts by which the column was impeded.

As was well observed by the Editor of the United Service Gazette, "Liston and Reeve never did any thing half so funny as the writer of this Despatch."

planters were anxious should be made throughout the West Indies.

The attention of the sister colonies was riveted on this island, as if any check were to be successfully offered to the ministerial measure, here was the spot to commence it.

A Governor presided, altogether of the slavery school in politics; closely linked with the most violent among the planters, and with whom his private necessities indeed, without other causes, would, it was imagined, compel him to side. So sanguine was the expectation of the result, that many persons, I have been informed, were to be heard calculating and discussing the rate of compensation and indemnity they would have a right to claim for all the negroes, that is to say, all that portion of their property which might be injured, in other words, butchered, during the period martial law should be in force. I cannot here avoid expressing my conviction that had any massacre of the blacks taken place, it would have been confined (save in those cases where personal feelings of revenge were stronger even than self-

interest) to the aged and worn out—to the mutilated and the useless. By this a two-fold object would have been attained — unmerited compensation, and riddance of profitless burdens. These schemes, thank God, were destined to be foiled.

One of the best men that ever breathed—one of the most loyal subjects king ever possessed —one of the most chivalrous spirits that ever adorned the ranks even of the British army, at this time commanded the troops in Trinidad, Lieutenant-Colonel Hardy, of the 19th Regiment; and by him alone were the contemplated atrocities prevented.

On the 31st July,* Colonel Hardy, through an official letter addressed to him by the Lieutenant-Governor, obtained the first glimpse of what was concocting.

His Excellency stated that in order to give security to the town and neighbourhood at that juncture, he had deemed it advisable to require the services of the militia; guards of which would

* See Note 24,

mount that evening at the different alarm posts specified.

To show that every thing was to be conducted on the most approved warlike system, His Excellency desired to be made acquainted with the mode of giving the sign and countersign, adding that he had confided this despatch to an officer of dragoons, and had moreover ordered two dragoons to be on duty at the 19th barracks, from that evening until further directions, for the purpose of conveying any communications the Colonel might have to make from St. James's, to Port of Spain, or the neighbourhood.

At this announcement great was the surprise of the military commandant; his own personal observation, joined to that of the officers of his regiment, having led him to believe that the tranquillity of the town was in not the slightest danger, and that so far from riot being contemplated by the negroes, their demeanour had been marked by increased decorum and civility, as the day for their partial manumission advanced. He, however, proceeded with all despatch to the town, where it

appeared the campaign was to open. On his arrival he found the streets thronged with militia troops; numerous posts occupied by them; artillery being brought into position; officers, in the utmost alarm and confusion, running to and fro, receiving and conveying reports; with other miserable tom-fooleries, which, as observed by himself, would have been truly laughable and ridiculous, had not the mischievous motives which put matters into such a posture rendered them infamous in the extreme.

It will be well to place before the reader an enumeration of the militia force of the island, as an idea may then be formed as to the real danger to be dreaded from any tumultuous assemblage of negroes, even had these been so inclined, as well as of the personal courage of those who, with such an enormous military force at their disposal, all prepared and under arms, could piteously whine, and implore the protection of the King's troops, amounting to not more than 150 effective men.

This, then, was the mighty muster of the Trinidadian heroes:—

Trinidad Light Dragoons,
St. Anne's Hussars,
St. Joseph's Light Cavalry,
North Naparima Cavalry,
South Naparima Cavalry,
Royal Trinidad Artillery,
Royal Trinidad Battalion,
Loyal Trinidad Battalion,
Sea Fencibles,
Diego Martin Chasseurs,
Diego Martin Infantry,
Carenage Battalion,
Loyal Trinidad Light Infantry Battalion,
Couva Battalion,
North Naparima Infantry,
South Naparima Infantry,
Savannah Rangers,
Arima Pioneer Corps,
Point Pierre Regiment,
Military Artificers' Company,
St. Joseph's Invalids,
Royal Invalid Corps, (fit for active service,)
Unattached—General Staff, &c. &c. &c.

Towards evening,* when the military arrangements were perfected, a plan of operations was transmitted to Colonel Hardy.

Up to this present moment,—(mark well the following facts, reader; I have them in the handwriting of Colonel Hardy, and they can be substantiated by every officer of the 19th Regiment, or other unprejudiced person, at that time in Trinidad,)—*up to this present moment,* the colony, as far as the slaves were concerned, was tranquillity itself. Up to this moment little, if any thing, had been done to instruct them as to their impending change of condition; they were altogether ignorant of the true intention of government, and of the distinction between slave and apprentice.

Weighing all these things, it required no very great powers of discrimination to perceive that the measures now in progress by Sir George Hill were not only unnecessary and ill judged, but manifestly the result of wicked advice and intentions. Colonel Hardy determined to be guided accordingly.

Thus stood affairs on the night of the 31st of

* See Note 25.

July. The whites passed it under arms, carousing, blaspheming, burning with schemes of blood; the blacks in prayer and thanksgiving to that Great Being in whom they placed their trust, and in visions of happiness which the following morn was to open upon them—poor, poor people!

On the 1st of August, at ten o'clock, a messenger arrived in breathless haste* at the barracks, bearing a communication from the Attorney-General of the colony, to the effect that a large number of apprenticed labourers had assembled before Government House, and numerous others, from various quarters, were hastening into the town; for which reasons His Excellency Sir George Hill desired that a company of the 19th Regiment should be sent to his assistance. Before acting upon this, Colonel Hardy resolved to inform himself a little of the true state of affairs, and mounting his horse, rode through all the principal streets of the town, and approaches to it, without witnessing any thing like a crowd or tumult. Upon arriving at Government House, he found assembled in front about

* See Note 26.

two hundred persons, mostly women, but all perfectly quiet and harmless in their demeanour.

Having thus satisfied himself, he, out of courtesy towards the Lieutenant-Governor, and with the view of removing the affright which seemed to have taken such possession of him, ordered a party of thirty men, under the command of an extremely intelligent young officer, Lieutenant Franklin, to proceed to Government House.

Neither on the march thither, nor on their arrival, did they perceive any symptoms of riot; the people assembled appearing to have been attracted solely by the novelty of a guard mounting at a spot where it had not been customary. The officer having, for form's sake, posted different sentries at the weak points, and disposed his men most appropriately in the event of a siege, was called into the council chamber. Upon informing the magnates there that the party under his command consisted of thirty men, one general voice was heard condemning the madness and folly of Colonel Hardy in sending such a ridiculously trifling force when the state of affairs was so alarming. A fresh

requisition* for troops was drawn up by Sir George Hill himself, urging the necessity of their presence, as not only had large numbers of negroes arrived, but others were arriving, and great danger was to be apprehended if the town negro apprentices joined and coalesced with those from the country. The personal attendance of Colonel Hardy was likewise requested, His Excellency being anxious to consult with him as to the necessity of getting these people out of the town, and the means to be employed.

On the receipt of this despatch, the colonel, without sending the augmentation of troops sued for, proceeded at once, and alone, and without receiving any molestation on the way, either by word or act, to Government House. He ascended to the Council-Chamber, which he found filled with lace and embroidery, feathers and spurs. From thence, casting his eyes into the streets below, which were crowded with infantry and cavalry, beggaring the Mayor of Garratt, he saw sufficient to tell him the real extent to which

* See Note 27.

matters had gone; and the great officers of state looked not a little foolish when the first words with which he accosted them were — "Well, gentlemen, where is the mob?" He was now attacked, open-mouthed, by all. The serious account he would have to render, were an insurrection to gain head from his inertness, was forcibly depicted to him. The eternal gratitude which the colonists would entertain towards him and his regiment, were they to come forward on this emergency, was dwelt upon: the strong proofs of this feeling, which he might expect to receive, were delicately hinted at; the whole ending with inuendoes, that suspicions were beginning to be entertained that feelings of a personal nature operated to prevent his interference, which he would do well to rebut by his actions, and to bear in mind the Bristol business, and the fate of Colonel Brereton!

No reply was vouchsafed to this insolence, save contemptuous silence, with a smile of scorn and derision, more expressive than words. Turning upon his heel, he left the Council to themselves.

A long and stormy consultation was now carried on; at the close of which, the presence of the officer, commanding the King's troops, was again required. The summons being obeyed, a paper was placed in his hands containing the draft of an address to the negroes, and of different measures of precaution and defence; but the whole wound up with a declaration of martial law in case of violence or disobedience by the negroes, or of their not immediately dispersing when the address should be concluded. To this Colonel Hardy at once offered a stern unqualified opinion of dissent and disapprobation; observing, that there appeared nothing to justify even the most distant allusion to so sad an expedient. He concluded a brief, but powerful remonstrance, with the following words, which would have carried shame and remorse to the hearts of all but the sordid race steeled by their slavery-politics against every humane emotion:—"Let us not, for God's sake,"—were the expressions of this excellent man,—"let us not usher in the grand national intention by a proclamation of martial law; which,

independently of filling the island with blood, will for ever exasperate against us the negro population. Conciliate, conciliate your free labourers, gentlemen, and they will repay you at a future period."

At this time about three hundred and fifty negroes had collected; the two sexes in nearly equal proportions; many of the women carrying children in their arms. They were mostly field-labourers, as their coarse dress and rustic appearance denoted.

It is likewise worthy of remark, that the negroes were not even armed with sticks, which is the more singular, as they rarely travel in a wild, woody country, like Trinidad, without a CUTLASS. The cutlass, indeed, is almost invariably carried by them, whether on the estate or elsewhere. It forms part of their equipment.

These people stood opposite Government House, quietly talking and joking with each other,—not one vociferation of an angry nature was to be heard. They appeared as ever—meek, and humble, and patient. Their object was simply to ascer-

tain whether (to employ their own words) "the King had made them free; and if free, to receive their free-papers, which King William had sent out."

In the course of the morning they had been brutally kicked and beaten by the police, as well as by the militia cavalry, who repeatedly charged, without being able to provoke them to any act of resistance.

But to return to the Address. It was now to be delivered. Bear in mind, reader, I must say once more, however prolix I may appear, that this was the first of August; and here were the poor creatures seeking the information they ought to have received in short printed and verbal notices, again and again repeated, six or twelve months before. They were still to be informed as to the intention of the British nation; they came to learn it. Here was their offence!

The Governor approached the window, the negroes ran up with eagerness to catch what he was about to utter. This was construed into an indication of a general assault.

"My God, we shall be murdered!" cried out the brilliant staff by which his Excellency was surrounded.

"We shall be murdered!" was re-echoed by others of his brave attendants; and a retrograde movement to the Council Chamber was effected with celerity, if not order.

Another consultation ensued; another appeal was made to Colonel Hardy, who stood smiling by. It was agreed that, at all risks, the Address must be delivered.

Sir George Hill again exhibited himself to the crowd, and in faltering accents commenced his harangue.

He explained several clauses of the Act; pointed out to the bewildered negroes that slavery had existed in the days of the Romans; that it was sanctioned by Divine writ; that they ought to be satisfied with their condition, and grateful to their masters, than whom none could be more kind and humane, &c. &c.

The speech was listened to with the utmost attention and respect. The deepest silence was

observed, until a sentence now and then concluded by telling them they were not free yet; that in their new condition they must still work six years in the fields, four years in domestic service. They shook their heads at this, and clasping their hands as if in prayer, or in distress, piteously exclaimed "Nee, Nee, Nee!"

Their disappointment was evidently severe. It was therefore no time to insist further by words. Their conviction was not reached in the moment by the harangue, after a long enjoyed hope, which was thus abruptly dashed to atoms; and six years in prospective seemed to them a new lease of slavery without limit, an aggravation of the calamities of their past lives.

Shortly after the Address, they were to be told that the mere act of their being assembled together was in contravention of the law, and that if within a short period they did not disperse and return home, they would be seized and thrown into prison.

When this was debated in the Council Room, Colonel Hardy ventured to remind the Council of

the ignorance in which the poor people had been left; and appealed to their feelings, whether this was not an occasion to treat with indulgence the transgression of strict rules by the new apprentices, carried as they were beyond them, by the greatest event, and most engrossing interest it was possible to conceive the human mind could be filled with. He proceeded to suggest, that as it was then six o'clock, and the rain had continued for several hours without intermission, by which the streets were completely flooded, and the assembled negroes drenched,—pointing at the same time to the miserable wretches below, who crouched within themselves, ignorant of the alarm they were occasioning, were looking up imploringly to the windows,—if the members of the Council would retire to their respective residences, and his Excellency order Government House at the same time to be shut up, thereby leaving the half drowned, hungry negroes to themselves, they would soon disperse of their own accord in search of shelter and food!

These humane and sane propositions were imperiously overruled.

"The rascals will commit excesses," cried one; "Drive them out of the town at the point of the bayonet," was the warlike speech of another; "Cut them to pieces," was the improved suggestion of a third; while a fourth, more prudent, simply advised, "that they should be forced into the yard, when a selection could be made from the most turbulent," &c. &c. The venerable Governor, the very picture of alarm, first looked at one, and then at another of the speakers; at length taking his cue from an influential adviser, he observed it was absolutely necessary to make an example, and that he gave his sanction to the capturing of the ringleaders.

Different warriors sprang from the room as if gallantly rushing on a forlorn hope, and when arrived in the streets, began to particularize the rebels whom they wished should be seized.

"Catch that rascal, I know him well." "Take that girl to jail, I will teach the ungrateful jade to ask for liberty;" and similar expressions re-

sounded on all sides. The militia cavalry, headed by their officers, formed a circle, in which they drove all they could, and who were taken off to jail without a show of resistance on their part, or on that of their friends and relatives.

On their arrival at the prison, the chief of police, a *ci-devant* planter, literally had the audacity to order the soldiers of the line, on the jail guard, to load their fire-locks with BALL CARTRIDGE:* a good specimen of the sanguinary cowardly feeling prevailing.

This glorious victory accomplished, His Excellency Sir George Hill rode through the crowd to his private residence, accompanied by Colonel Hardy on foot. Not a murmur nor disrespectful word was to be heard. The Colonel having seen his Excellency safe, returned to the barracks, delighted with the demeanour of the poor blacks, deeply pitying them, and disapproving, or rather disgusted with, every other part of the scene acted during the day.

* See Note 28.

At night the proceedings were all of a similar nature. Every half hour the streets were perambulated by the militia infantry, as well as by a cavalry piquet from the same force. Much displeasure was expressed at what was termed the indifference of the officer of the 19th regiment, Lieutenant Franklin, who had remained with his party at Government-House, and who refused to lend an ear to their tales of danger. In vain did this young man, who throughout showed himself well worthy of the confidence reposed in him by his commanding officer, when he selected him for the important duty on which he was employed, remark upon the quietness of the negroes, and the utter groundlessness for any alarm. Will it be believed that his listeners strove to impress upon him, that this very quietness was to be dreaded above all things (and they who had lived all their days among them must surely know the negro character better than any military gentleman could pretend to do), as it evinced a blood-thirsty doggedness quite appalling; and that there existed no doubt of the negroes having cutlasses concealed

near the town, which they only waited the opportunity to employ. There could be no clearer proof of this, according to these reasoners, than the blacks being unarmed during the day! However contemptible these fears may appear now, they assumed a very different complexion at that moment, when they were shared by some of the first characters in the colony; among others, by the Attorney-General, who literally came to the guard-room occupied by Lieutenant Franklin to solicit protection, and there passed the night, armed to the teeth; thus giving his countenance to deeds, which it was his bounden duty to discourage.

Lieutenant Franklin, on the following morning, reported to the commandant that the town had remained undisturbed throughout the night: indeed the only time his services were required was to arrange a somewhat singular dispute among the militia themselves. It is so ludicrous, that I must be pardoned if I describe it. It appeared that at one post was a guard of fifty men, but giving only one sentry. Now the difficulty was how each

man was to mount once as sentry during the night, so that each might boast in after days of having confronted danger, and that none might have the power of taunting another with having drawn back from peril!

Thus ended the First of August.

CHAPTER XVI.

Demand for Troops — Alarming Reports — Appeal to Colonel Hardy—Further Attempts at Martial Law—Horrible Occurrence—Flogging Parade—Subsequent Floggings—Astounding Fact—Sir George Hill, Bart.—Colonel Hardy.

THE small party friendly to the negroes indulged a hope that their enemies would now desist from their iniquitous schemes. They were the more sanguine from learning, in the forenoon of the 2d of August, that although the council had been in deliberation for some hours, no rumours had transpired of a fresh call for troops, nor had the officer commanding been sent for. These expectations were vain.* About six o'clock in the evening, a

* See Note 29.

requisition was transmitted to the barracks for the instant marching into the town of a further force of one officer and fifty men.

Colonel Hardy, without complying with the demand, went at once to Sir George Hill to remonstrate against it. He represented, in the first place, that it was far beyond his means, in reference to the future efficiency of the troops, should necessity require them, of which, however, he was free to confess he anticipated no prospect; secondly, that he was firmly of opinion the militia parades of the two preceding days had done considerable harm, as the employment of the military in any country, where the people themselves could not but feel there was no necessity for such a step, cheapened the troops, and the effect which their very appearance ought to produce would be lost by an injudicious and too frequent resort to them. He, therefore, claimed the privilege of protesting, in the strongest manner, against the bringing his Majesty's troops into notice, until a real occasion required them.

It was not deemed expedient by Sir George

Hill and his advisers to agitate the question further at that moment: consequently peace and quietness reigned throughout the day and night.

Thus ended the 2d of August.

The first thing presented to Sir George Hill the following morning was an official report from Colonel Hardy,* in which he had the gratification of conveying to his Excellency the intelligence that the "utmost silence and tranquillity" had continued all night in the town.

In the face of this, his Excellency's advisers had sufficient sway over him to induce him to make another attempt in favour of their wishes.

Colonel Hardy was requested to attend before the council. When there, he was harangued by Sir George Hill on the aspect of affairs, represented by His Excellency to be alarming in the extreme; that he, Sir George, had received reports which could be faithfully relied on, to the effect that the danger on the east coast of the island was imminent; that nothing could equal the consternation prevailing in the town, where the

* See Note 30.

most interesting families were literally in a frenzy of terror; that all North and South Naparima were at that moment marching across the Savannah Grande on Port of Spain, upon which a plan of attack had been organized, and where SIX THOUSAND domestic apprentices were prepared to rise and join the insurgents from without; that all Arima and the approaches to it were in such a state of insurrection, that he had been compelled to order that ONE HUNDRED and FIFTY stand of arms, and FOUR THOUSAND rounds of BALL CARTRIDGE, should be sent there the following day, under an escort of police. His Excellency continued, that it had always been a great happiness to him to have the ready and cheerful cooperation of his Majesty's military officers until that period, when the want of it was so painful to him. He implored him to reflect on the wealth in the treasury, and then to say whether, in such a fearful crisis, he could reconcile it to himself to persist in his opposition to the employment of the troops of the line.

To impress this address more particularly, his

Excellency finished by reading aloud the Order in Council, requiring military cooperation.

All present chimed in, of course, with this solemn appeal, and, as usual, many HITS were made at Colonel Hardy, by allusions to poor Brereton and the Bristol affair. It was thought impossible that he could remain unmoved. They, however, miscalculated grievously: the man before them was made of materials incomprehensible to minds like theirs.

Passing over with contempt the sarcasms levelled at himself personally, he replied that he had been too much accustomed in Trinidad to reports of impending dangers, to be moved by the present, especially after being an eye-witness of the perfect tranquillity prevailing, and which had been confirmed by the reports to the same effect which he had received from the officers under his command. He craved permission to remind Sir George Hill that, during his Excellency's administration, rumours of insurrection had been most frequent, and that the result of all, without one single exception, had proved them false. He more

particularly recalled to his Excellency's memory the occurrences of the preceding Christmas, when he, Sir George, had been led to believe, by designing people, that the negroes were planning an attack on the town, and a general massacre of the whites.

Under these circumstances, he reasserted his firm conviction that there existed no necessity whatever for the calling out of the military, and that he would not give his concurrence to the employment of the King's troops without urgent and evident necessity, nor until the police and militia had been found insufficient to preserve the peace. At the same time he begged to suggest, whether, if the country were in the convulsed state represented by his Excellency, it would be wise to send the 150 stand of arms and 4,000 ball cartridges destined for Arima, under the escort proposed; and that as his opposition was founded on principle only, he now of his own accord recommended recourse to the military, and that the stores in question should be sent under a guard of regular troops, which he would immediately afford, and direct the officer in command of the same to remain two or three days

This gentleman commenced by stating, that the ringleaders who had been captured on the preceding Saturday, had received their respective floggings in jail, whereas it would have had a far better effect had such been inflicted in public. (God forgive me if I am uncharitable in the belief—I shall retain it to my dying day—that this afterthought of flogging in public originated in the hope that the negroes, on witnessing the tortures of their friends and relatives, might be moved from their passiveness.)

"It is therefore proposed," continued the Secretary, "that fresh people should now be flogged, it being requisite a public example should be made; and as unfortunately the negroes persist in believing that the intention from home has not been faithfully given them, and they have been heard to say, that this belief was confirmed by their having hitherto seen the police who were paid by the colony, and the militia, who were their masters, and who belonged to the colony, brought out against them, while the King's troops were not, his Excellency and the Council think it would be

an excellent plan to undeceive them on this point, and as the floggings are to take place immediately, Sir George Hill trusts you will be so good as to march in a detachment of the 19th Regiment to witness the punishments."

To this a decided refusal was given, as well as to numerous arguments and appeals followed up by the same gentleman, who found himself compelled to convey the untoward result of his mission to the Council.

He shortly returned with Sir George Hill's expressions of deep regret at the Colonel's determination, and his Excellency's previous wish modified to *hastening* into town the reinforcement which had been demanded.

Colonel Hardy, however, remained inflexible: he declined hastening the movement of the troops, assuring the Secretary, that even when they did arrive they should in no shape whatever participate in the intended spectacle.

These discussions having occasioned delay, the flogging parade was postponed.

The termination of this day's proceedings will

cause the blood of every man who has a heart, to run cold with horror. The Attorney-General, on coming, after dining with Sir George Hill, to his place of refuge, (the above-mentioned guard-room, occupied by Lieutenant Franklin,) requested this officer to accompany him to the police office, to inquire what had become of "some poor devils" whom he, the Attorney-General, had sent thither for shelter. On their arrival, and demanding of the Alguazil on duty where the people in question had been lodged, the reply was, "in the court-yard;" but as the man appeared considerably embarrassed, the Attorney-General desired to be immediately conducted to the place. When within a few yards, and their footsteps could be heard by the inmates, horrible and deafening shrieks issued. The only exclamations to be distinguished were, "For mercy's sake open the door; we are dying; we shall be smothered; water! water!"

Notwithstanding the peremptory orders of the Attorney-General, the Alguazil offered many remonstrances against unbolting the gate, which he after all would not do until he had drawn out his

assistants, and properly disposed them to resist the attack, which he felt convinced would be made by the prisoners.

The bolts being at length loosened, the scene which presented itself could not have been surpassed at the celebrated "Black Hole of Calcutta."

A large number of miserable negroes, male and female, were there jammed so closely together as to be unable to move hand or foot; so jammed, that no comparison can afford even a distant conception, except it be the manner in which planks are stowed one upon the other on board a ship. Many of them were chained,—many in hand-cuffs, —many bound to stocks.

In vain did the Attorney-General and his companion endeavour to take a nearer survey of the frightful spectacle; they were forced to rush back in haste, such were the stench and steam issuing from the den.

The shrieks, moans, and exclamations became more appalling; the cries, above all, for "water! water!" more incessant, as the wretched creatures now began to hope that a deliverance from their

agonies was at hand. A few moments longer and they would have been out of the reach of human aid—of human torment.

As soon as they were released from their chains, they rushed to the streets panting, to inhale the air of heaven; and, O God! what a sight it was to behold the frensied and convulsive manner in which they dashed themselves into the gutters to cool their burning frames, and slake their thirst.

These first wants satisfied, they collected among themselves a few pieces of coin; and one of them humbly approaching the jailer, and offering the mite, besought that a little bread might be granted. So far from entertaining rancour at the treatment they had experienced, all their feelings were centered in gratitude for their liberation; and they were to be seen struggling to embrace the knees of those who had so opportunely come to their deliverance.

I will not dwell on this topic longer than to explain, that no absolute criminality attaches to the Attorney-General for the part taken by him in the transaction; to do him justice, he was

shocked at the occurrence. It appeared that these negroes had come to him in the morning, many miles from the country, to learn whether they "were free or not." He gave them readily the explanation, and advised them to return to their homes. They expressed themselves perfectly satisfied; but remarked, that it was then too late, considering the distance they would have to travel; and that if he could find them shelter for the night, they would be off peaceably the following morning early. He gave them a letter to deliver at the Police-Office, containing a request to the authorities there that the people in question should be "taken care of." The result of this recommendation has been seen by the reader.

Except for the nocturnal visit of the Attorney-General,—(whether undertaken with the view of simply whiling away an idle hour when "flushed with the grape," it is not requisite to seek,)—except for this visit, (and he ought ever to bless the happy thought which prompted it,) the dead bodies alone of these negroes would have met his sight on the morrow!

Thus ended the 4th of August.

Sir George Hill received on the morning of the 5th the usual report of the perfect tranquillity of the town during the preceding night.

Colonel Hardy,* likewise, in a letter bearing this day's date, conveyed to Lieutenant-Colonel Bridgeman, Deputy Adjutant-General of the Forces in the West Indies, the intelligence, that up to this moment every thing in Trinidad was quiet: and moreover, that the assemblages of negroes appeared to have been for the greater part women.

At nine o'clock, however, bugles sounded in all directions to arms, and the militia assembled in battle array. The officer on duty at Government House now really began to imagine that something serious had occurred; and hurried to gain information, so as to dispose his force accordingly; but finding that all these preparations were for the "flogging parade," he returned to his post.

At nine o'clock Sir George Hill made his appearance, surrounded by a numerous staff, and

* See Note 33.

colonists of all ranks. A deep and mysterious consultation seemed to be carrying on in the circle about him; great rivalry existed among the different commanders of brigades and battalions, as to which should enjoy the privilege of being nearest the spot where the free apprentices were to be flogged. This consultation was on the respective claims of each: a point of honour was concerned. The anxiety to be close to the triangles did not originate altogether in a wish to gloat as much as possible on the tortures of the wretches tied up, but in the heroic one of being closest to danger should a rescue be attempted.

This arranged, the floggings were loudly called for: but one more trial was to be made to force the regular troops into action; could this be succeeded in, even at the twelfth hour, it would speak for the danger in which the colony had been placed.

It was known that Colonel Hardy was at some distance from the town, having left the guard there under command of Lieutenant Franklin. This officer was sent for: it was expected he

would prove more tractable than his chief, at all events more likely to be browbeaten by persons in authority. On presenting himself before Sir George Hill, his Excellency, who thought to carry the point by a *coup de main*, which would have reflected credit on the lower branches of that profession once followed by him, thus accosted him:—"By the bye, I neglected to issue directions for the attendance here to-day of the detachment under your command: you will be pleased, therefore, to bring it up, and to lose no time in obeying this my positive order." He then turned away, calculating that the presumptuous subaltern would not have dared reply. This young officer, although taken by surprise, with a tact and discretion beyond his years, after expressing deep regret at not "being able to comply on his own responsibility with his Excellency's commands," explained "that he had received positive injunctions from his military superiors, to bear in mind that his guard was not liable to the call of a magistrate short of riot, fire, or tumult; and that, above all, provided no breach of the peace

took place, he was not to allow his men to assist at any punishments."

He however offered to send for further instructions should Sir George Hill so desire.

Nothing was to be gained by this; his Excellency therefore, after angrily desiring that the guard should be in readiness to turn out, if any disturbance should occur during the infliction of the floggings, ordered that no more delay should take place, and retired to a convenient distance, from whence with telescope in hand, he could enjoy a clear view of the stage.

The triangles were fixed, around them bristled cannon of every calibre; while the entire square was thickly studded with battalions. The *free* apprentices were brought out—stript of their covering—tied up. When their bodies had been sufficiently mutilated, and exhausted nature could support no more, they were loosened from the stakes, and dragged back to the dungeon. The troops defiled with exultation; the planters and storekeepers congratulated each other on the happy termination of the campaign. Calm was restored to the breasts

of their gentle wives and daughters, who, posted at the surrounding windows and balconies, had had THEIR share of the exquisite spectacle: and thus finished the fifth day of freedom.

It must not be supposed these were the only floggings inflicted; there were many, many others, but they were attended with less of the "pride and pomp of war." For long after this, the punishment of apprentices by the lash was daily to be witnessed, and was ordered by the Chief of Police, one Mr. Benjamin Hughes, (formerly a planter,) whom Sir Geore Hill invested with the powers of a magistrate for this purpose. These floggings usually took place in the Cabildo yard, between the hours of six and seven in the morning. Eventually, however, the shrieks of the sufferers having lost their novelty, were pronounced disagreeable by the neighbourhood, and the apparatus, a wooden machine in the form of a crucifix, on which the victims were extended, was destroyed, and the flagellations removed to another spot. The negroes, after having undergone these punishments, crawled as they could to the respective estates,

where they arrived half dead for want of food, and where a farther exercise of the "lash" in time reduced them to submission.

For the heroic services of the militia during this crisis, brilliant eulogiums were lavished upon the officers, and a gratuity of two and sixpence sterling, and a pair of shoes, was bestowed upon each private engaged. In alluding to these latter, I must mention a circumstance, full of matter for reflection, namely, that it was the belief of many, (and it has been confirmed by what has since transpired,) that had martial law been proclaimed, and any large number of negroes massacred, the militia privates, composed mostly of free men of African extraction, would have split into two opposite and desperate parties. This terrible result appears never for an instant to have crossed the mind of Sir George Hill, or his advisers.

Had it taken place, we may feel assured that the flame would have spread from island to island, and that a foundation would have been laid for the converting the West India possessions of England into New St. Domingos.

There still remains to be exhibited one more fact connected with these proceedings, a fact so astounding, that I know not whether to attribute it to the extreme of wickness, or to the extreme of madness: I will, therefore, without comment, leave it to the cool, dispassionate judgment of the reader.

It has been seen that the first of August passed off in entire tranquillity among the negroes; that this tranquillity continued on the second, on the third, on the fourth, and on the fifth. That the commanding officer of the troops daily transmitted to His Excellency the Governor, an official report of the state of things, formed on his own personal observation, and had likewise, on the fifth, conveyed intelligence of the same pacific nature to the Governor-General of the West Indies, in a letter addressed to the Deputy-Adjutant-General of the Forces.

In the face of this,* Sir George Hill, without reference to the officer commanding the forces in the island, without his concurrence or knowledge,

* See Note 34.

despatched to Barbadoes a demand for an additional body of two hundred troops of the line.

On the 6th of the month only, did Colonel Hardy learn, by general report, that a reinforcement had been applied for. He then begged to know from his Excellency to what extent, and whether any preparations had been made for the quarters of the same, should it arrive.

The ultimate result of the whole of this might indeed serve to "point a moral, or adorn a tale."

The Right Honourable Sir George Hill, Bart. continues Governor of Trinidad, and has reaped, according to fame, both thanks and rewards from His Majesty's Government for the judgment, energy, and talent displayed by him in crushing the fearful insurrection with which the colony confided to his rule had been menaced!

On the other hand, Colonel Hardy, to whom so many are indebted that they and their families were not massacred; he to whom England owes, that the grand national wish for the abolition of slavery was carried into effect, unaccompanied by the blood of hundreds, perhaps thousands, remained unnoticed;

and unrewarded, save by the testimony of an approving conscience; and after having received in his own name, and in that of his regiment, every species of malignant insult from the sanguinary faction which he had thwarted, yielded up his pure and noble spirit in the land saved by his exertions, and where not even a stone records the spot where lie mouldering his earthly remains!

CHAPTER XVII.

Abolition Act failed — Why — Ministers opposed by their own Officers—Treacherous Conduct towards the Apprentices—Joseph Sturge's Remarks touching the "Compensation"—LordGlenelg's Paper [illegible]—Number of Lashes inflicted—Lord Glenelg on the Flogging of the Women—Summary of the whole—Want of Schools and Churches—Trinidad.

For almost two years after the last chapter was written, I had ample opportunity of watching the manner in which the apprenticeship system was carried on by the planters, and were I called upon to give a direct answer to the question, "How has the Royal Order in Council of the 5th June, 1834, worked?" I should at once state my conviction, that as far as the slave is concerned, his situation has not been ameliorated.

For two years after the Abolition Act, I saw the insidious manner in which the humane and well-intentioned provisions of that act were evaded or neutralized* by local enactments.

* For example, it was declared that no apprentice should be punished by his master, nor by the order of any but a magistrate. This was got over thus: a planter dissatisfied with an apprentice, immediately sent him to another planter who was a magistrate, to be flogged, and this other sent a slave in his turn.

Few things occasioned more evil than the manner of appointing special justices. Thus in Trinidad, from 1st August, 1834, to 18th June, 1835, the apprentices were still subjected to the judicially coercive authority of their employers, who, to the number of 140, were appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor to act as justices, (as his Excellency says,) under the act, but which, to my humble reading of the same act, was in direct violation of the Parliamentary pledge of his Majesty's Ministers. Will it not strike the weakest mind that nothing could be more unjust or more treacherous, towards the miserable negro, than to confide to such men the very power which ought to be applied in other hands to restrain them from further oppression? These men had the means of completely thwarting the operation of the bill. They, as well as the stipendiaries who came after, invariably refused to allow apprentices to avail themselves of professional aid voluntarily offered in cases brought before them.

The proceedings were private, except to the parties immediately concerned, by which mode of trial the magistrate was effectually screened from justice, and the illiterate negro not only left to himself for defence, and generally without being permitted to cite his witnesses, but in cases of illegal decisions on *ex parte* evidence, debarred from all redress; for to say the ordinary tribunals of the country are open to a being deprived of his personal liberty by law, without the means of litigating, or of obtaining an advocate to undertake his cause, would be a cruel and insulting piece of mockery and hypocrisy.

I witnessed the manner in which in the Chartered Colonies the local legislatures set at defiance the government of this country, and in the Crown Colonies I saw that those who most violently and most effectually opposed the benevolent purposes of the Minister of the Crown, were the chief officers of the Crown itself.

I witnessed sufficient to impress upon me, that until the present system of local government was destroyed root and branch, and an equitable and salutary administration established, every thing like justice must languish and wither under the baneful influence of colonial despotism.

Upon all of these subjects I had written at large, and the result was about to be submitted to the public, with minute details of individual acts of atrocity which had come to my immediate knowledge, when there was forwarded to me that complete exposure of colonial iniquities* put forth by

* The West Indies in 1837. By Joseph Sturge and Thomas Harvey.

This admirable work ought to be in the possession of every one who wishes to know what our colonies really are.

Although it has been before the public nearly twelve months, none of the frightful and revolting acts therein detailed have been

the humane party, who in 1837 proceeded to the West Indies for the purpose of judging, from personal observation, of the manner in which the apprenticeship system was working.

I found that the details in this publication were so completely the counterparts of those in my own manuscript, while at the same time they were treated in so much more able, and above all more temperate, and consequently more useful style, that I resolved to cancel what I had prepared, and to confine myself to generalities.

disproved; on the contrary, every succeeding investigation has more and more confirmed its truth.

It is to be lamented that Sir Lionel Smith should have been induced to sanction a feeling against Mr. Sturge. It is perfectly true, as stated by Sir Lionel to Lord Glenelg, that Mr. Sturge had declined to dine with him, but surely candour might have induced him to add, that when Mr. Sturge respectfully declined the invitation, he at the same time expressed his readiness to meet his Excellency in private. That he used a proper discretion in this respect is confirmed by the fact, that Mr. W. E. Gladstone, in the House of Commons, accused him of accepting the hospitality of the planters, and then coming to England to bring charges against them.

Mr. Gladstone is, without doubt a highly talented and honourable gentleman, but like many others holding property in the West Indies, he evinces extreme sensitiveness whenever the subject is introduced, and to use the expressions employed at a meeting held at Exeter Hall, "seems to merge the member of Parliament in the planter," and appears rather as the advocate of West India interests, than a senator to decide between the oppressor and the oppressed.

It became very soon evident that the colonists had no intention whatever of employing the interval between the apprenticeship and the entire freedom of their former slaves, in allaying and reconciling animosities, or in creating a foundation for feelings of mutual kindness between the whites and the blacks. They shewed themselves determined to forget that the sole reason why *immediate* freedom was not granted to the slaves when the loan of fifteen millions sterling was converted into a costly gift* of twenty, was based upon the

* Many acts of infamy were committed in respect to this compensation. Wealthy planters bought up at one-third, or one-fourth of their value, the claims upon the government for compensation, by poor ignorant people, whose entire property consisted in two, three, or four slaves.

On this, however, reaching the ears of Lord Glenelg, he, with a promptitude which reflects honour on him as a man, took steps to prevent these sales from being confirmed by the Courts of Law. Many thousands have to thank Lord Glenelg for having saved them from utter ruin. The annexed extract from a letter now before me, will convey an idea of the system.

"*Trinidad.*

"The Secretary for this colony has become a defaulter for 40,000 dollars.

"It is said that persons HIGH in office are implicated in this transaction; they having persuaded the Secretary to permit them to speculate with the money in the treasury chest, in cajoling poor ignorant people out of their claims for compensation, persuading

notion that an intermediate period of *conciliation* and *education* was requisite to enable the slaves to receive the boon of freedom with becoming sobriety.

These principles were incessantly and strongly urged by this government in all its despatches, counsels, and remonstrances addressed to the different colonies.

So far from any attention being vouchsafed to them, the planters began to show that to the former motives which actuated them in their oppression of the slaves, were now added feelings of deep revenge, and that they were resolved to exercise the utmost ingenuity for the purpose of inflicting torture upon their fellow-creatures.

The immediate effect was a frightful addition to the miseries of the negro population.

In twenty-two months from the coming into force of the Abolition Act, no less than five hundred and seventy-four thousand one hundred and

these latter that the chance of payment from the British Government was very remote.

"The treasury chest was examined in pursuance of a peremptory order from home, and before the deficit could be made good."

seventy-five lashes were inflicted on the bodies of the apprentices, besides punishments of other descriptions to the amount of 104,165.*

It should be remembered, that although these numbers are taken from Parliamentary papers, it is to be presumed the punishments were far more numerous, as the returns were extremely defective.

In Trinidad for example, the records of punishment affecting four judicial districts, comprising a population of 8,510 apprenticed labourers, are LOST, and in Dominica the returns were made from two special justices only, although they were during the other months usually made from six.

Surely the most prejudiced mind must admit that these dreadful punishments could not have been called for by necessity, but must have been inflicted solely from vindictive feelings, when it is known that at this very time there existed abundant proof† of the general good conduct of the

* This includes Jamaica.

† *Vide* Proceedings of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, 28th March, 1836.

apprenticed labourers, and of their perfect willingness to work.

But independently of these *recorded* punishments by the lash, thousands of lashes were inflicted, and upon females too, which could not be inserted in the returns. They were given in the prisons, and came under the head of jail discipline.

Many will be prepared to offer an indignant denial to this part of the volume; I cannot therefore do better than transcribe the sentiments of Lord Glenelg upon this subject.

Thus in the House of Peers does his Lordship express himself: "That provision of the act which forbade females being lashed for apprenticeship offences has been set at defiance; it had been scorned and contemned by the injustice and the *revenge* of the former masters of those unhappy slaves. And who do your Lordships suppose had been selected for the purpose of inflicting cruelty in the Houses of Correction? Why, the class of men selected were the very men who should not have been chosen; they were convicts for life,

men dead to all sense of honour, of feeling, of humanity; these were the men who did not refuse to apply the lash to females, who entered into a vile combination with their employers to glut the evil passions of both. They who indulged these aspirations of vengeance were lost to all thoughts of happiness, of hope, and of respect for themselves. In spite of the law, females had the lash applied to them for apprenticeship offences."

This must be decisive as to the *conciliation* practised by the colonists; I will therefore only detain the reader for one moment longer upon the subject, for the purpose of presenting the powerful summary of the entire system, as given in an extremely interesting publication, entitled, "Negro Apprenticeship in the British Colonies."

It is now ascertained that in the workhouses, and other places of confinement, the most ordinary sympathies, the most common decencies, the most imperative necessities of humanity, have been systematically outraged by monsters, to whom the "tender mercy" of colonial functionaries has entrusted the administration of these judicial tortures.

Women in an advanced stage of pregnancy, mothers with infants at the breast, young girls, sick and aged apprentices of both sexes, have been consigned, on the slightest pretexts, to those dens of outrage and pollution. While there, they have been compelled to perform the terrific labours of the tread-mill, and of the penal gang, beneath the lash of prison drivers, who are themselves frequently convicts for life; they have been subjected moreover to "cruel mockings and scourgings;" they have been inhumanly lacerated and bruised; they have been loaded with galling chains and collars; they have been wantonly shorn of their hair;* their persons have been indecently exposed, and treated with needless indignities; they have been deprived of proper nourishment and attendance, and even of the consolations of the ministers of religion; some of the younger females have been tempted to escape these barbarities by surrendering themselves to the brutal passions of their drivers; while others have preferred torture, "not

* This is a most dreadful punishment in these climates; it leaves the skull unprotected, exposed to the rays of a tropical sun.

accepting such deliverance." In a word, no pains have been spared to aggravate the terrors of imprisonment. At the termination of the ordeal, the miserable sufferers have, in some instances, been dismissed, covered with putrefying sores; several persons have actually expired from the effect of these frightful tortures; and others have only recovered from wounds inflicted by the cat and the mill, and from the exhausting effects of prison discipline, after long treatment in hospitals, where they have been again exposed to all the additional suffering which heartlessness and neglect could inflict upon them.

Those who may not have perused "Williams's Narrative," are counselled to do so; they will there see the greater part of the above summary detailed.

This narrative was investigated by a Commission, who admitted its truth in every point.

Now let us examine whether the colonists have acted more mercifully in respect to *educating* their apprentices, than they have done in *conciliating* them.

Strangers arriving at the chief towns in the colonies, better known as the seats of government, and perceiving a fair proportion of schools, are apt to imagine that such is the case throughout the island. Nothing can be more erroneous than this; for although on a few estates in the interior, schools may have been permitted, yet on the generality the owners have virulently opposed the introduction of any system of education. I have carefully and most conscientiously examined into this particular subject, and truth compels me to declare that no improvement (beyond what existed at the time the Abolition Act came into force,) either moral, social, or religious, has been attempted by the planters; they have obstinately resisted all suggestions of the government to introduce a system of education among the negroes, and no one single measure of colonial legislation can be quoted in any way tending to the improvement of the negro.

As the island of Trinidad is one of the largest and most important, and one likely at a future day to perform a very conspicuous part, a description of the

system there will be sufficient to enable the reader to judge as to the condition of the remainder.

As to the Protestant establishments, there is but *one* place of worship of the Church of England, and a Methodist chapel, both in Port of Spain. At San Fernando, a village in the district of Naporima, thirty miles down the coast, a Methodist missionary is preaching the gospel, but under such persecutions that it is much to be feared he will be compelled to desist.

In the intervening district, although thickly inhabited, there is not a single church. The colonists complain a good deal of the Bishop of Barbadoes having abandoned the colony as past redemption; this accusation is worthy of the community. The fact is, the Bishop has often sent clergymen, and volunteered to send more, indeed as many as might be required; but the inhabitants have constantly refused to make any provision for them, owing to which they have seen themselves forced, overwhelmed with difficulties, to quit the island.*

* From this neglect of the Protestants, Catholicism has much increased, and if that creed is to be the general one, I would strongly suggest that in the selection of priests the preference

In respect to schools, whenever any have been projected in the town by private individuals, the apprentices have been as much as possible prevented from attending.

The two *national* schools, formed some years ago by Sir Ralph Woodford, have been suffered to go into decay; and with regard even to these, it is worthy of remark, as showing that the firmness of Woodford was obliged sometimes to yield to the slavery party, that one of the fundamental rules still unrepealed is, that none but free persons could be admitted.

In the town there is a school, to the support of which the Bishop of Barbadoes gives £50, but there are only twenty children of apprenticed labourers who are included in the number of its scholars. There is likewise a small school lately got up by the Protestant rector, the Rev. Mr. Cummins, who, by the bye, being a humane and enlightened man, has received considerable persecution from the dominant party.

should invariably be given to British subjects; as foreign ones, especially French from Martinique and Guadaloupe, are the very last who should be introduced into a British settlement.

There is nothing besides these under the protection of the Established Church.

A fair number, however, of apprentices derive benefit from the Methodist Sunday schools, as well as from the Rev. Padrè di Quiros, of the Separia mission, who has much exerted himself in endeavouring to educate the negroes. Don Alfonso, a learned Spaniard, curate of San Juan, about five miles from Port of Spain, keeps a school at his own expense for bond and free. There is likewise the Rev. Abbé Power, who, by means of subscriptions from the *coloured* inhabitants, has established a school and chapel for the negroes; he, I grieve to say, has been much opposed, not only by the planters, which was to be expected, but even by his own diocesan, the resident Roman-catholic bishop, Dr. M'Donnell, who appears strongly to object to the poor being taught.

I would now request the reader to pause, and ask himself whether the colonists are doing any thing to remove the obstacles to the safe and effectual introduction of entire freedom; whether there exists any probability of the negroes being

more fitted for the boon in 1840 than they were in 1834; and above all, if the experiment should prove a failure, to whom must be traced the cause; —to the negro, who cheerfully and faithfully performed every part of HIS contract; or to the planter, who systematically and treacherously has violated every pledge, given or implied by him when he received the sacrifice so nobly made by the people of England?

CHAPTER XVIII.

Political Dissertation on the now altered Condition of the Blacks—Duties of this Country towards her Free Black Citizens—How to be performed—Great Points for Consideration—All depends on the People—Hints to the Emancipationists—Conclusion.

THE anticipations and assertions so repeatedly expressed in the foregoing pages, of the utter and undoubted failure of the apprenticeship system, have, since they were written, and while they were already in preparation for the press, been amply realized by the event. The system no longer exists. The apprentices are free men. The last remnant of slavery has been extirpated in the West Indies!

Had the writer's views extended no further than what is called immediate abolition, he would have

abstained from offering to the public any argument in support of a foregone conclusion.

Doubtless it is a great and glorious triumph that has already been achieved in the cause of religion and humanity, and it is one too for which we ought to be grateful to Him in whose name chiefly that triumph was sought for; but however much we may rejoice at it as the reward of past exertions, we ought still more to be cheered by it as an earnest of future success. For to imagine that the contest is now over, and that the friends of the negro may throw up their task as accomplished, as if, because the last links of his personal servitude were now broken, he might safely or properly be left to the *public* care and superintendence of such rulers as I have described, is grievously to *underrate* the duties of this country towards the negro portion of its subjects, and to *overrate* just as much the fitness and the disposition of the colonists to enter rightly upon their new functions, no longer now of masters or owners, but of governors and guardians.

If, indeed, it was in a spirit of willing acquiescence that they had anticipated the determination of this country, we might hope that they would for the future endeavour to conform to its policy; or if they had as yet shown in their public capacity (to omit all mention of their conduct as individuals) the slightest symptoms of kindness or of justice towards their black fellow-citizens, we might not be unwilling to trust them uncontrolled with the direction of their now altered destinies; but what was it but the apparent determination of this country no longer to be trifled with in this matter, that has forced them to this act of ungracious and unpromising submission? And what was it that elicited from us in England the expression of such resolve, but the flagrant and audacious manner in which they had, in the most recent instance, abused our ill-judged forbearance, and the unmitigated system of oppression, which they continued to uphold under a new name and by a weaker title? Are we then to suppose that if the change from slavery to apprenticeship has not been productive of good, that the mere naked boon of freedom will

be all-sufficient of itself to heal the wounds inflicted as much by the late tyranny of masters as by the previous cruelty of owners, and to repair the breach which the experiment of apprenticeship has but tended to widen? Are we, in a word, to believe that because the colonial legislatures have, with a sort of equivocal spontaneity, dubbed the negro *free*, they therefore intend to treat him as a *free* man; that is to say, as one equally entitled with the more favoured and exalted caste, to the benefit of impartial laws, and requiring *more* than they do the fostering and paternal care of his rulers?

There is something no less suspicious than surprising in this unaccustomed alacrity of concession, this sudden and unaccountable freak of colonial kindness and generosity. One is loth, indeed, to impute to one's fellow-creatures the conception of so nefarious a project as seeking to turn their own gift against the breasts of those to whom it is given; but it is difficult not to suspect that there may be something of a lurking hope, if not the actual wish, that the

very suddenness of the compliance may defeat the objects of the demand, and that the name of negro freedom may be discredited, and the thing itself, perhaps, rejected as a chimera, from the failure of an unprepared experiment. Not indeed that they can possibly entertain so wild a notion as that personal slavery in all its horrors, and with its hideous name, will ever again be restored in any place where England rules; but it is *possible*, if the colonists *are "left to themselves,"* * as they modestly ask to be, in the management of this great trust,—it is possible that oppressive laws,† such as they will then be free to make, may supply the place of tyrannical ownership; and

* See late Address of the Jamaica House of Assembly.

† The avowed object of the colonists at present is to obtain vagrant, police, and control laws. We must keep a sharp look out on these points. No man should be deemed a VAGRANT till he had committed some offence against society; and all should be allowed to go where they judge best, to sell what they choose, and to engage themselves to any master they think fit, without any pass or permit from any authority whatever.

Can we feel surprise if the negroes, now they are free, should wish to quit the estates where they have been barbarously treated, where every thing reminds them of their former misery, where the trees are yet clotted with their blood, and where the valleys yet resound with their shrieks? Surely no one will contend that they

though one man shall no longer be bought and sold by another in open market, yet that the negro portion of the people in each colony shall be treated and used by the white as their collective property, to be cared for only in proportion to their productiveness, to be legislated for only with a view to their repression. Surmises even worse than these, as to the intentions of the dominant party in the colonies, might well be justified by a consideration of their past conduct.

We have seen in what way and in what spirit the last great boon of this country (for such it was intended to be) was ushered in to the acceptance of the negroes, and we well know that the manner in which it continued to be doled out was truly worthy of such threatening and malevolent auspices.

We have seen by what arts and by what influences the planters contrived to make subservient

should not have the privilege of removing themselves to other spots. This, however, the colonists will strive to prevent by a code of vagrant laws.

It would also be well that no contract for labour should be binding more than a month.

to their will the magistrates who had been specially appointed for the protection of the negro, and how, having converted them, or most of them, into instruments,* willing or unwilling, of their tyranny, they continued to perpetuate, with their assistance, the very same species of cruelties, and almost to the same extent which they themselves were, by the terms of the new law, (which, by the bye, was frequently infringed,) debarred from inflicting by their own authority.

But what is above all to be remembered at the present time, is the indifference, or as it has more often been, the hostility, with which they have hitherto encountered all attempts that have been made to prepare the negro by education for his altered lot. What then from these facts are we to expect from the colonists if left to themselves, or in what way will they effect the accomplishment of that great change of which they

* Never let it be forgotten by the people of England, that in two years of the administration of the special magistrates in Jamaica, 60,000 apprentices received in the aggregate one quarter of a MILLION of lashes; and 50,000 other punishments, by the treadmill, chain gang, &c.

have thus neglected the preparation? Can we doubt but that the same policy, so to call it, which has disgraced their past conduct, will also set its stamp upon their future proceedings, and that the same spirit of unvarying hostility, of unreasoning contempt, which the negro suffered under in slavery, and which did not relax during his apprenticeship, awaits him also in his state of freedom? And what are we to expect as to the result? Why, not only that nothing will be done to meet the new emergency as it should be met, but that, if the planters should succeed in lulling by their seeming liberality the watchfulness of this country, a systematic attempt will be made by them to neutralize the boon which they have assumed to dispense, and to bring back the negro, by a prædial code of coercion, to a state very nearly resembling that of personal slavery;* or if they should fail in that project, is it doing them much injustice to suppose that they will seek to bring about by means more or less violent, by a

* No legal difficulties should be thrown in the way of the negro buying small quantities of land, and he should not be turned out of his cottage or garden, without at least six months' notice.

process more or less gradual, the extinction* of a race which they can no longer, if I may coin such an expression, UTILIZE in their own way, and with whom it is true they cannot exist in safety, unless they be either their slaves, or I will speak the word, their equals ?†

Of one thing at any rate we may be certain, that the same defective machinery, the same corrupt administration, by which the negro was deba ed from his JUST *rights* as an apprentice, will equally

* "In Demerara, in 1832, the number of negroes above six years of age were 76,000; in 1834, they had diminished 3,500.

"From 1817 to 1832, the physical strength of the negroes was reduced 23,644: one-fourth of the colony destroyed in fifteen years.

"On seventeen estates in Demerara there were 1,304 males, and 1,169 females, with only 319 children under nine years of age. On a moderate computation there ought to have been from 800 to 900.

"The alarm at this decrease was very great, but this will be increased if the colonists are allowed to introduce Coolies from Hindostan; for as long as the planters can calculate upon the cultivation of the estates by the importation of *adult* labourers, they will have no inducement to take care of the offspring of the negroes."—*Extract from the eloquent Speech delivered by F. Scoble, Esq. at Exeter Hall, April 4th*, 1838.

† Perhaps too they might look for a fresh supply of bondsmen, not to say slaves, from the new traffic in human flesh which has been opened in another quarter of the globe; but there too must we trust that the humanity of England, influenced and directed as it has been by one from whose eye and from whose tongue nothing escapes, will disappoint their hopes.

fail to secure him his *just rights* as a free man; and we should bear in mind as to this point, that in proportion as he has acquired more right, he is open to more wrongs; that in proportion as he has been thrown more upon his own means, and is more dependent upon legal protection,* will he suffer more, in his property at least, from the imperfections, the partialities, the *expensiveness* of law. We should remember too that however fairly he may be dealt with, yet that the change has not been one to him of pure advantage,† and in particular that the same act which released him from all personal dependence on the planter, has exonerated the latter from the obligation under which he was laid of supporting those whose youth and strength had been worn out in his service. It would be too much to expect that the munificence

* It is of the last importance that in all future colonial legislation, the *onus probandi* should in every case be thrown upon the accuser, and that all should be presumed innocent till proved to be guilty.

† Formerly the slave could recover any debt due to him, by a summary process free of expense, but this was done away with even during the apprenticeship, except in cases arising out of contracts for work.

of colonial legislatures should supply the gap thus made by the withdrawal of private assistance.

What then are we to conclude from all this as to the *present* duties of this country towards this much injured class of our fellow-subjects? Why, that the obligation of these duties, so far from having expired, or being discharged, has become on the contrary more than ever binding and imperative; or that if it has lost any thing in intensity by the blotting out of the crying sin of actual slavery, it has acquired on the other hand a complexity and a reach, which it never before possessed, from the new relations that have been created, the great experiment that is to be tried. It is indeed a great, and as yet altogether a novel experiment, and it is one which every lover of humanity, every follower of the Christian faith, must view with feelings of anxious interest. It is an experiment, how far the black portion of mankind, whom, degraded as they have hitherto been, we yet see to be endowed with the same faculties, whom we believe to be possessed of the same souls, and partakers of the same high hopes with

ourselves, are capable of being raised to the same level, by the fostering hand of a Christian Government. But if this experiment, mighty as it is, and in its results of a most awful import, is ever to be fairly and successfully tried, it is now and by us; for in the first instance, it is but too evident, even if we had not the painful experience of our colonial history to warn and to instruct us, that when a white and a black race are cooped up together within the same limits, but with all, or almost all the powers of government* in the hands of the former, all idea of benevolent, or even of equal legislation towards the latter is utterly out of the question. The prejudices of colour are too strong, the juxta-position of unfriendly elements is too close, the irritation that ensues is too constant, to admit of such a hope; nor will time, which has obliterated in many other countries the enmity between the dominant and the subject race, by the intermingling of their stocks, be ever sufficient of

* This would naturally happen in the absence of all foreign controlling power from the *present* difference in civilization between the two races.

itself to put an end to this conflict. For while the mark of distinction remains undisguised, and each man carries his pedigree written upon his forehead, each successive period of unjust dominion will but add a prescriptive title to the tyranny which it has continued, and the longer the negro will have been oppressed, or to say the least of it, *depressed*, the more deeply rooted will become the notion of a right so to use those who from time immemorial have never been known to exist in any other condition.

It is quite clear, then, that the only chance of equal legislation being dealt out between the two races thus placed in contact with each other, the only chance of the negro deriving that benefit which he is capable of deriving from being a member of a civilized and Christian community, consists in this—that the supreme power of government resides in a distant state, beyond the reach of those sinister and disturbing influences which prevail upon the spot. In this case England is such a state with reference to its colonies; and if England, with greater means of carrying its purposes into

effect than any other country ever possessed, with a clearer knowledge of its duties than any other country was ever blessed with, should yet shrink from the duty which is now cast upon it, how slender is the hope that any other country, more enlightened, more liberal, more religious, and at the same time no less powerful than we are, should be found to our disgrace to do that which we ought to have done, and which we cannot leave undone without conveying to future ages an impression most fatal to the negro,—that having done so much, we only stopped there, because we thought that to do more was impracticable.

This, then, is the position in which we are placed; this the responsibility which we have voluntarily taken upon ourselves; this the task, to the performance of which we have deeply pledged our honour and our conscience.

For every boon that we have as yet dealt out, though with a slow and sparing hand, conveys with it, if rightly understood, a pledge that we will not stop there; and all that we have as yet done amounts only to this—that the

negroes, released from all other ties, and debarred from all other claims, are become fit subjects for the laws, and the laws only, to protect and to provide for, to civilize and to raise.

We have brought them and ourselves into this dilemma: that they must either be qualified, and that without delay, to become useful, intelligent, and obedient citizens, or they must be doomed again to abject, hopeless, and eternal slavery. The only other alternative, and it is one from which even the planters of Jamaica would shrink, is the utter extinction of the race.

The question, then, to be resolved is, in what way is the duty of this country to be discharged?

The Writer of these pages would be stepping out of his province, if he should attempt to point out every particular enactment, every special regulation, that is requisite to carry out to its legitimate consequences the great measure of abolition; he will, therefore, content himself with indicating the chief objects to be had in view, and generally the means by which they may be attained.

The first great point is the securing to the

negro the full enjoyment of those new rights to which he has been called by law. For this end it is abundantly proved, by what has been before said, that, in the first instance, is required a thorough reform in the magistracy, whereby it shall become more honest and more independent; and generally a more equal * and incorrupt administration of the law in all its branches.

The next great point to be attended to is the moral improvement and elevation of the negro, as well by schools provided at the public expense of the colonies, as by promoting among them, as far as it may be done by law, those habits and feelings which are at once the great end, and the most active means of civilization. I allude more particularly to the encouragement of marriage, and discouragement of illicit intercourse among the negroes, which has hitherto been more than connived at by their immediate masters and rulers.

The third great point, to which the attention of the country should be forcibly and permanently

* Jurymen should be selected without distinction of colour; and, above all, the law should be made cheaper, as its dearness very much adds to the inequality between *white* and *black*.

directed, and which follows as a natural corollary from the other two, is to extend to the negro a fair share in the power * and in the honours of that government of which he is subject. Such a pretension will elicit, no doubt, an indignant sneer from those who, according to their own notion, and in *one* sense of the word, represent the whole *humanity* of the colonies; and if the decision of the matter were left in their hands, a sneer would be, no doubt, the only answer it would meet with. But, however monstrous and intolerable may appear in their eyes the idea of a negro sitting in the House of Assembly, or, worse still, perhaps in the council-room of the "Illustrious Cabildo,"†

* I am most decidedly of opinion that the elective franchise should be given to all negroes who can read and write, and who understand the first four rules of arithmetic.

I am well aware that Lord Sligo thinks that no good will ever be done under colonial legislation; and perhaps no man's opinion should carry greater weight, considering the opportunities he has had of forming a sound one: still, looking to Trinidad, Demerara, and the Mauritius, (all Crown colonies,) I am inclined to fear that little good can be done without it; and I cannot help thinking that, if *all* classes were properly represented, the local legislatures and local tribunals would then be the best safeguards of the people's liberty and general welfare.

† This is a municipal body, self-elected, in the island of Trinidad, and arrogates to itself powers independent of the Crown. It

it is far *more* monstrous, far *more* intolerable, that the immense majority of the *free* citizens in a state should be without representatives of their own caste, and their own choosing, to take their place among its rulers: and if patience under injury be any pledge of moderation in better fortune; or if a lively sense of gratitude, for which the negro is perhaps beyond all other men distinguished, be at all akin to justice; there may be worse senators and worse magistrates to be found in our colonies, than might be supplied from the coloured people they *now* contain.

At any rate, what means the gift of *complete* enfranchisement, if those to whom it is extended are for ever to be shut out from all the common paths of honourable competition?* and what prospect is there of moral elevation in those to

is composed of men who have emerged from the lower walks of life, most of whom have dipped their hands deep in slavery, and all linked to the system by which they have thriven.

* Even the Spanish government, more than fifty years ago, used to allow rank of every description in the militia to black men; and I have perused numerous commissions to this effect, all specifying that they had been granted for good and tried service.

I am forced to confess that, AS YET, Trinidad has every reason to lament that she did not remain under Spanish rule.

whom the brand of public distrust shall continue to attach, and the imputed incapacity for any but the most servile employments? Or, to put the case on more selfish grounds, what hope is there that men shall become useful, industrious, and obedient citizens, from whom the ordinary rewards of industry and good conduct shall for ever be withheld?

Such is the bare outline of that great scheme of improvement, which this country has bound itself either to carry, or to see carried, into effect. It would indeed be idle to hope, in the furtherance of this scheme, for any thing in the shape of cordial cooperation from the colonial legislatures; but the pledge of England is not to be forfeited because some of her dependencies are unwilling to assist in its redemption; nor should we find any valid excuse for the non-performance of our duties in any such opposition as we have the power effectually and without difficulty to put down.

In the prosecution of this great work, the prejudices and the selfishness of planters must not be allowed to stand in our way; even their chartered

rights must, if necessary, be put aside: and whatever changes, if any, in the constitution of our colonies, as well as whatever reforms in their administration, shall be required, to make them fit instruments of our purpose, those changes must be made—those reforms must be brought about.

The only question that yet remains, is how far the government of this country is prepared of its own accord to take upon itself, and to prosecute with fitting zeal, the fulfilment of this task, and to discharge the weighty duties of redress and amelioration which England still owes to that unhappy race, which was in the first instance kidnapped and enslaved at our instigation, and has ever since been in many ways ill used, oppressed, and tortured with our knowledge and connivance.

Far be it from me to detract in any way from the character of the present Ministry, still less to withhold from them that praise which is due to them for the general liberality of their measures, and their prevailing disposition to do justice to all men; but we must not expect from *any* Ministry, nor from the majority of any Parliament,

that they should lend any thing but a bare passive concurrence to any plans not immediately bearing upon some nearer or more *material* interest, and not essentially conducive to the triumph or establishment of the party to which they belong; and although it might be too much to say that in matters of legislation, all great and generous ideas emanate from the people, yet it is from the people alone that they derive that fervour of zeal, and that integrity of purpose, which are required for their final realization.

It is to the people then that we must look in this instance, and more particularly to that portion or *party* among them, if we may fairly call by that name those whose objects are so far above the ordinary objects of party,—it is to them I say who have virtually done all that yet has been done, that we must look for the accomplishment of all, (which is the greater part) that yet remains to be done. To that party then I would say in conclusion, Let them go on as they have begun, and the same success that has attended their past endeavours, will also wait upon their future labours.

Let them continue, as they have pledged themselves to do, and as they have done in one memorable instance,* in a spirit more pure than patriotism, more holy than mere human benevolence, to make this the paramount object of their public endeavours, the indispensable condition of their political confidence, and it cannot be but that nicely balanced as the two great parties of the state now are, whichever is for the time at the helm, willingly or perforce must fall into their views. Let them only not fear to use their power so lately tried, let them only not shrink from their new responsibilites, nor draw back from the performance of their increased, though altered duties, and that great experiment which we said before was to be tried, and which it cannot be too often repeated this country has undertaken to try, shall be made under their auspices, and to their honour; the experiment I mean of civilizing and raising the black to the level even of the white.

What may be the issue of this mighty attempt

* The late Gloucestershire election, where the candidate was rejected, because he would not pledge himself to immediate abolition.

is known only to Him who has created both, and who scans with an unerring eye the capabilities of each; but to them, that is, to the Emancipationists of Great Britain, will belong the praise of having made the trial; and when that trial has been made, but not till then, they will have done what man could do, to vindicate, in the person of the degraded African, the dignity of the human race, and the more glorious equality of the Christian brotherhood.*

* Since this chapter was written, I have been favoured with the perusal of an address preparing for presentation to Lord Glenelg. As the intentions I have attributed to the colonists are more clearly developed and defined in this address, I am convinced that it will be acceptable to the reader to have the substance of it placed before him.

It is pressed upon the notice of his Lordship, that although the local legislatures have terminated the existence of slavery, yet the legislative acts which preceded it, and which had in view its termination, as well as those measures which accompanied and succeeded it, manifestly display a fixed determination to coerce labour under the new system, and as much as possible to bring the negro freeman under the tyranny of his old master.

The address proceeds to state, that in a recent publication on "The Permanent Laws of the Emancipated Colonies," understood to be drawn up by a gentleman of great legal ability, of high character, and of unquestionable accuracy, it is demonstrated, that the laws which were to come into operation immediately on the expiration of the apprenticeship are of the most objectionable character, and "fully establish the fact, not only of a future intention to infringe the rights of the emancipated classes, but of the actual commencement and extensive progress of a colonial system for

that purpose." The object of the laws on which he animadverts, is to circumscribe the market for free labour—to prohibit the possession or sale of ordinary articles of produce or sale, the obvious intention of which is to confine the emancipated classes to a course of agricultural servitude—to give the employers a monopoly of labour, and to keep down a free competition for wages—to create new and various modes of apprenticeship for the purpose of prolonging prædial service, together with many evils of the late system —to introduce unnecessary restraints and coercion, the design of which is to create a perpetual surveillance over the liberated negroes, and to establish a legislative despotism. The several laws passed are based upon the most vicious principles of legislation, and in their operation will be found intolerably oppressive, and entirely subversive of the just intentions of the British Legislature.

The militia laws are open to the most serious objections, not only as imposing onerous duties and expenses on those least able to bear them, but as totally unnecessary for the preservation of the public peace.

The trespass laws of the colonies are most cruelly constructed, and may become great engines of oppression under the new system, whilst those which respect offences against persons and property, are open to the worst description of abuse.

The emigration laws are framed not on the principle of protecting the ignorant and unsuspecting labourers against the frauds which might be practised on them by interested individuals; but on the principle of protecting the interests of proprietors in the old and comparatively impoverished colonies, from which the labouring classes might be tempted to depart in search of higher wages, and superior comforts.

The committee terminate their address by begging to assure Lord Glenelg, that they rely with confidence on Her Majesty's Government, that they will, in the legitimate exercise of the high powers with which they are invested, perfect the great work of negro freedom, and allow only such measures to become the permanent laws of the colonies, as shall secure to the emancipated slaves, in the fullest sense, the unrestricted disposal of their labour—the unrestrained right of access to every part of the colonies—the complete security of person and property—and the full enjoyment of the rights of conscience.—*Central Negro Emancipation Committee, to the Right Honourable Lord Glenelg.*